

Post-Conflict Policing: The Experience of New Zealand Police in Solomon Islands

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of a

Master of Arts in Political Science

Department of Political Science, School of International Social and Political Sciences

College of Arts

University of Canterbury

2014

Acknowledgements

The work that follows could never have been completed without the investment of a number of my peers and mentors. Their ongoing support, both personal and professional, was central to both my academic development and my personal fulfilment over the past several years. There are far too many to thank here. However, I would like to extend my personal gratitude to the following people.

To those within the New Zealand Police who supported my application for research, helped improve the project's design and participated in interviews; thank you. I hope the following thesis rewards your commitment and is of some benefit to the future efforts of New Zealand Police.

Thank you also to my supervisor, Associate Professor Jim Ockey, for your input and investment in this work. Your insight and your encouragement were of huge personal value to me and I hope that this work reflects, in some way, my gratitude to you.

Other staff, both academic and general, within the UC Political Science Department have also helped along the way. They include, but are not limited to, my secondary supervisor, Dr. Joanna Goven, Dr. Naimah Talib, Rochelle Bloy, and, of course, Jill Dolby.

Finally, I would like to thank those who worked alongside me on the 5th Floor of the Locke Building. There are too many to name individually but you know who you are: you went for coffee and slice runs, you called into the office for a chat, you came to Thesis Writers' Group meetings, and you played afternoon cricket.

Abstract

The thesis explores the roles and responsibilities of New Zealand Police deployed under the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, established in 2003. Their work under this banner continues a growing trend that sees the deployment of constabulary police officers to post-conflict societies to re-establish order and build a framework for sustainable peace. Where the existing literature considers the normative dimensions of this trend, this thesis looks more closely at the micro-level interaction between international police officers and citizens of post-conflict societies. In particular, it asks questions about the suitability and sustainability of the community policing model; a model that has developed over several decades in an internal law-enforcement context but is relatively new to the peace-building sphere.

The research focus is drawn from the extensive literature on the use of community policing in domestic contexts but is adapted in order to speak back to the literature on peace-building and international policing.

The everyday experiences of New Zealand Police were deployed to Solomon Islands were explored through semi-structured interviews. In particular, the thesis found that officers experiences little of the ethnic conflict that had, according to international media, been the hallmark of the Tension period and that they showed a nuanced understanding of the social and political climate of the communities they operated in. It further found that, while officers were often keen to show respect for local tradition and local power structures, they also saw that in some cases these structures needed to be broken down for the safety and well-being of local people, particularly women and children. The New Zealand style of community policing sometimes clashed with that other contingents but overall the strength of the personal and professional relationships they had with those they worked with was the most decisive factor influencing their experience.

While much of the discussion centres on the community model, the findings highlight the importance of people in the peace-building process. The model played an important role in facilitating a broad-based policing initiative in Solomon Islands but it was the personal investment by individual officers going about their everyday work that was often crucial in breaking down the barriers to peace. The finding points to the importance of empowering communities in exercising ownership over the peace-building process and the role that police officers from another country can play in encouraging that process.

Contents

Introduction	7
Communities and Conflict in Solomon Islands: 1998-2003.....	12
Authority, Order and Development in Solomon Islands.....	13
Conflict and Constructions during the ‘Tensions’	21
A Failed Peace and a ‘Failed State’	26
The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands.....	30
RAMSI and the Participating Police Force.....	33
Conclusion.....	36
Community Policing in the ‘Foreign Policy Space’	40
Policing Models and Professionalism.....	41
Community Policing.....	45
Engaging Communities in the “Foreign Policy Space”	51
‘Communities’ in Conflict.....	52
Outreach and Inequality.....	55
Trust	57
Organisational Change.....	60
Conclusion.....	63
Research Scope and Methodology.....	65
The Experiences of International Police Peace-builders	71
‘Communities’ in Conflict.....	71
Outreach and Inequality	80
Trust	86
Cooperation and Coordination.....	90
Capacity and Confidence in the Development of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force. ..	91
Coordination, Compatibility and the Community Policing Ethic	96

Conclusion.....	99
Conclusion.....	100
Bibliography.....	110

Introduction

The first cases of police officers being utilised in a peacekeeping capacity saw Ghanaian officers deployed in 1960 under the United Nations Observer Mission in Congo to work in support of local forces (Greener 2009a). Since these early exercises, the practice has developed to become an integral component of many multilateral peacekeeping missions. The practice grew rapidly through the 1990s with UN Police being deployed to missions in Namibia, Angola, El Salvador, Western Sahara, Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Mozambique, Haiti, Rwanda, Guatemala, the Central African Republic, East Timor and Sierra Leone (Australian Federal Police 2006). Between 1995 and 2010, the total number of UN Police officers authorised to serve under UNPOL rose from 5,840 to over 17,500 (UNPOL 2013).

The adoption of international policing forms part of a wider shift that has seen the expansion and reconfiguration of the mechanisms of post-conflict intervention following the end of the Cold War. It is representative of a renewed effort by international powers to police the global order and combat cases of local or regional instability in a increasingly interconnected global space (Goldsmith & Sheptycki 2007). It also reflects the increased attention given to the institutional dimensions and coercive capacity of states in strategic assessments of global stability in the wake of 9/11 (Doornbos 2002; Hameiri 2008; Milliken & Krause 2002).

Recent efforts to broaden the terms for international intervention (Chandler 2004) have seen international policing move closer to the centre of many peace-building and state-building strategies. In these roles, international police perform a broad and multi-faceted function, involving not only peace-keeping, but increasingly the more comprehensive work of peace-building. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon (2013) writes: "In addition to protecting individuals, they [UN Police] help society as a whole by redefining the role of policing in countries emerging from conflict, forging trust in uniformed police, establishing faith in national justice systems and fostering confidence in peace processes."

Performing this role in a post-conflict setting is not without its difficulties. In 2006 the Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police (AFP), a policing organisation that has played a significant role in recent international policing missions, stated that "sending police into a foreign land to make peace is a very different role to the one we performed in the past" and outlined some of the challenges that have emerged as police organisations have moved into the "foreign policy space". His outline of the many political, professional and personal issues associated with the shift highlights the significance of this change for both police organisations

and policy-makers alike. In a speech titled “Policing in a Foreign Policy Space”, the Commissioner commented:

The AFP has been steeped in the Western tradition of impartiality and the prevention of crime but is that best suited to the conduct of international peacekeeping operations in morally ambiguous circumstances? In many cases, police in these situations are forced to operate and co-operate with governments and individuals who are either corrupt, or involved in illegal or immoral activities. This can be a confronting and disheartening experience for those police officers involved, and it can have ramifications both for the success of the mission and for the perspective of those individual police officers involved...I think we need to have it clear in our own minds whether we are engaging in these interventions out of a genuine attempt to build better community or are we more concerned about our own national security...or is it a combination of both? (Australian Federal Police 2006).

The Commissioner’s comments highlight the sense of uncertainty that many police organisations have come up against as they transition into the international peacekeeping space. Deployed in this role, international police officers operate at the intersection of a myriad of local, national and international forces; a position that requires that the demands of international donors are balanced against local social and political realities as well as organisational and logistical capabilities. This challenge is present not only for policy-makers and strategists but also for individual police officers engaging and interacting with the host society and its problems on a day-to-day basis.

As international policing has become more widespread, observers have begun to look closer at some of these challenges. Various efforts have been made to understand the philosophy underlying international policing, analyse its political implications, and review its practical implementation.

Much of the academic literature thus far has been directed at the appropriateness and effectiveness of international policing as a form of post-conflict intervention or capacity development. In a similar way to the existing literature on military-led peacekeeping, the contributions here focus on some of the legal and logistical issues associated with involving police organisations in large-scale integrated peace-keeping mandates (Dupont & Tanner 2009; Greener 2009b; Hills 1998; Oswald & Bates 2010; Rausch 2002). They highlight challenges posed by the integration of policing practices and ethics into what are typically military-led operations as well as those associated with the re-integration of officers back into their domestic departments. These more practical concerns are of vital importance to the structure

and functioning of international policing missions and the contributions offer various recommendations through which to improve its effectiveness and efficiency.

A further strand of the literature considers the global dimensions of the practice. Anchored in discussions of sovereignty, and the changing global order, much of the focus in this section of the literature centres on “...how, if at all, the rise in international policing represents any kind of qualitative shift with regards to broader concepts of intervention” (Greener 2009a:5-6). Contributors highlight the ways in which international policing affects the traditional distinction between internal and external and how the practice is connected to broader normative shifts in the international socio-political landscape.

These are important and interesting discussions and their findings will not be ignored here. However, the intention here is to analyse the issue from within a different conceptual framework, paying greater attention to local level dynamics and the experience of individual officers as peace-builders in a post-conflict society. In particular, it is an attempt to understand more about the interactions between officers of a highly organised and professional international police force and members of fragile local communities emerging from violent conflict.

The starting point for this research is not to consider international policing as something entirely new for police organisations but as a further step in their development as a professional police force. Approaching the issue in such a way reveals that dealing with issues surrounding cultural difference, trust, and legitimacy is not new to the police. Throughout their modern history, police organisations have come up against such issues and been forced to negotiate them. Such experiences have shaped the practices of policing in contemporary societies and affected the ways in which officers interact with and relate to the community they police. Through this process has developed a series of policing strategies that have come to re-define how police officers carry out their day-to-day task and, more broadly, how police forces interact with the community they operate in. Known broadly as community policing, the approach represents an attempt to re-orient and enhance police-community relations in urban neighbourhoods and rural communities. While community policing has been used domestically for several decades, recent shifts towards more advanced forms of intervention mean that it is now being utilised as a model for post-conflict peace-building in many mission environments around the world (Emmott et al. 2010; Mobekk 2002; Murphy 2007).

The literature surrounding the development of community policing provides a particularly useful lens for understanding international policing as it focuses primarily on the interface between officer and citizen and, through this, better isolates the social, political and cultural dimensions of their interaction. Using this literature as a base can allow for a greater insight

into the dynamics of international policing in a post-conflict society and some of the implications that flow from the deployment of international police forces into host communities.

This research uses the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) as a case study for exploring some of the issues that arise at the interface between members of RAMSI's Participating Police Force (PPF) and local Solomon Islands communities. It aims to contribute to the wider international policing literature by providing a window into the local-level challenges associated with missions of this kind. At the same time, it aims to discover more about the successes and difficulties that come out of the export of the community-oriented policing approach to the "foreign policy space".

The thesis begins with a background to the case study. The chapter looks back at the genesis of the conflict in Solomon Islands as well as its unravelling in the years prior to RAMSI's arrival. As well as providing a chronological outline of the 'Tension' years in Solomon Islands, the chapter also aims to map some of the key hallmarks of the local socio-political landscape. Identifying and discussing these hallmarks at the outset helps to provide some context to the discussion that follows and, in doing so, allows for a more clearly directed research focus. The chapter then outlines the background and build-up to the deployment of RAMSI as well as some of the important features of the policing approach being utilised by the PPF.

The focus in chapter three shifts to a discussion of modern policing and the evolution of policing models. In particular, it focuses on the development of community-oriented policing; the model that informs much of the work carried out by the PPF under RAMSI. After establishing its core doctrine and outlining its primary dimensions, the chapter reviews the literature surrounding the development of community-oriented policing and raises questions about how the unique dynamics of police-community interaction within a post-conflict society might help or hinder the search for a durable peace in Solomon Islands.

Before discussing the research findings in chapter five, chapter four sets out the qualitative research design. Semi-structured interviews with New Zealand members of the PPF are used to learn more about their experience policing at the street-level in Solomon Islands. The chapter outlines the benefits and limitations of using such a methodology and discusses how these affect the scope of the research as a result.

The final chapter (chapter five) discusses the findings of those interviews and analyses their implications for the research questions. The various achievements and challenges faced by individual officers are described so as to give an insight into some of the local-level dynamics of post-conflict community policing. Their experiences reveal that such efforts can be hindered by a myriad of local factors and made more difficult by the complex and sometimes confusing

nature of communal behaviour. They also reveal, however, the significant gains that can be made through small gestures and ultimately the importance of strong personal relationships both within the policing contingent and with local communities.

Communities and Conflict in Solomon Islands: 1998-2003

Learning more about the interaction between international police officers and local communities in post-conflict societies requires an assessment of the wider social and political context in which that interaction takes place as well as some understanding of how that context contributes to conceptions of order, authority and social cohesion in those communities. Not only does this allow for a greater degree of insight into the complexities and nuances of the host society, it also helps to provide a picture of what would have faced many international police officers upon their arrival. In the case of Solomon Islands, the work of the Participating Police Force (PPF) sits within a much wider restructuring effort aimed at re-building the central infrastructure of the Solomon Islands state and establishing a sustainable peace. This as well as recent political upheaval and social dislocation add a greater degree of complexity to the process of reform and heightens the need for sensitivity in pursuing such changes. It is important therefore to understand some of the intricacies of the Solomon Islands state, society, and political experience before progressing.

In fast-moving and rapidly-evolving post-conflict environments it is often tempting to look for simplistic explanations rather than look deeper into historical or structural processes that may help to identify problems or provide solutions. For this reason, some time is spent here documenting the recent history of Solomon Islands and the unique circumstances that police reformers face in their task to implement an effective and equitable community policing programme.

The period of violent conflict and disorder that broke out in Solomon Islands from 1998-2003, known as 'The Tensions', was the result of a unique combination of historical grievances, newly-emerging socio-economic pressures, and more immediate catalyst events that served to turn a collection of disparate, yet interdependent, communities against one another. While conflict has for a long time been a component of Solomon Islands political life (Allen & Dinnen 2010), the violent conflict that defined the Tensions was not an inevitable product of its history. Rather it represented the culmination of a number of long-term and short-term factors that allowed for the re-drawing of social boundaries and the colonisation of the political sphere by militant leaders (Braithwaite et al. 2010; Commission 2012; Dinnen 2002; Hameiri 2007; Kabutaulaka 2001).

It has become commonplace to explain the conflict through an ethnic lens, describing the Tensions as a conflict between the indigenous residents of Guadalcanal (represented by the Isatabu Freedom Movement) and settler Malaitans (represented by the Malaitan Eagle Force).

While the conflict between these two groups was significant, to focus solely on this particular cleavage obscures the much deeper social conflicts (Kabutaulaka 2001), evident at a number of levels, that turned fragmentation into exclusion and fuelled the violence that became the surface expression of the Tensions. To better isolate the dimensions of this conflict requires some appreciation of both the historical context and the key trends defining the Solomon Islands political and social sphere in the lead-up to, and during, the Tensions.

Authority, Order and Development in Solomon Islands

Solomon Islands gained its independence from Britain in 1978. Colonial rule defined the nature of Solomon Islands government and the structure of its national institutions. The Westminster parliamentary system that Solomon Islands inherited created national governing institutions alongside a diverse range of indigenous governance systems. Despite pressure for federal government from several Guadalcanal groups, political power in Solomon Islands remains relatively centralised with a unicameral Westminster parliament of 50 members representing 50 constituencies governing national affairs.¹ The Prime Minister is elected from within the National Parliament.

While the structure is similar to that of other Westminster parliaments, its functioning is more unique. Governments in Solomon Islands have struggled to produce legitimate and effective leadership with only a small few managing to survive for a full-term in the years since independence (Australian Strategic Policy Institute 2003). Governing coalitions remain only marginal in terms of relevance to the everyday lives of Solomon Islanders with most Members relying on local networks and welfare systems that developed prior to the arrival of a centralised state (Braithwaite et al. 2010).

Steeves' (1996) concept of 'unbounded politics' provides a useful model for understanding the Solomon Islands party system as well as the broader political culture. Unbounded politics refers to the weakness of political parties to command the loyalty of elected members and thus their inability to control the legislative agenda. It also describes the tenuous nature of coalition governments made up of a range of different interests and a high number of independent Members. Political parties in Solomon Islands are loose formations with little organisation beyond the elites and an absence of strong ideological leanings or established constituencies. Because of their relative youth and the lack of a strong civil society or mass media in Solomon Islands, they have little presence outside of parliament, and even less in rural areas

¹ A degree of regional autonomy is provided with 10 provincial assemblies, which are again divided into local wards, administering regional affairs.

(Kabutaulaka 2006). This fluidity, both Steeves (1996) and Kabutaulaka (2006) argue, is a central cause of government instability as members' allegiances lie primarily with local patronage networks rather than party doctrine.

There are a number of other explanations for the perceived failure of successive national governments to develop into meaningful institution in Solomon Islands. Kwa'ialoa (2007:113) writes from a Malaitan perspective and argues:

We now know that Solomon Islands gained independence too early, because our leaders encouraged us to admire and respect them and led us into a system which did not serve the needs or interests of the people. This has put us into three categories; the governing group who became rich overnight, the middle group who tried business without much success, and the grassroots who had nothing to develop themselves with. The point is that the rich have got richer and the poor have got poorer, and a deprived man is an angry man, who will steal and rape or even kill.

Whether more time under colonial rule would have prevented these problems is unclear. However, many agree with Kwa'ialoa that the governing institutions Solomon Islands was left with contributed to a disjuncture between state and society with the result that governments struggled to become relevant to the people that they governed (Dinnen 2002; Moore 2004; Wainwright 2003). Like in other places, colonial rule was unevenly applied and, in several cases, actively resisted (Allen & Dinnen 2010). This, in effect, made the centralised state an "ill-fitting overlay" that was unable to control more powerful and more resilient customary practices (Wainwright 2003:488).

An alternative view is provided by those who characterise the relationship between colonial institutions and customary practices as being one of interdependence, rather than incompatibility (Fraenkel 2004; Hameiri 2007). Hameiri argues that in attempting to map out the relationship between state and custom in Solomon Islands, observers often de-contextualise them and, in doing so, portray them as static entities. While there are key points of differences between traditional and modern practices, decades of interaction between the two has contributed to a unique fusion of customary processes with introduced systems. "Introduced institutions have been thoroughly indigenised," Fraenkel (2004:43) writes. Thus, rather than frame the relationship along the lines of the traditional-modern binary, both Hameiri and Fraenkel instead aim to highlight the points of interaction between the two, particularly the ways in which customary processes have provided a mechanism for mitigating tension and fostering development.

In describing the fluidity of national politics in Solomon Islands, Hameiri (2007:422) highlights the influence of political-economy in defining the nature of conflict and cooperation at the elite level:

This is not a matter of traditional versus modern institutions, but one of political coalition making in the context of limited and unsustained economic development, which is reliant on foreign-owned, resource-intensive, and migrant labor-dependent export industries, in a geographically and ethnically fragmented country.

This perspective offers a more nuanced depiction of Solomon Islands society than that advanced by Kwa'ioloa (2007) and others. It demonstrates the ability of local people and local institutions to adapt to new processes but also highlights the destabilising, and sometimes harmful, effects that these processes can have. For international observers, it points to the interconnectedness of social, political, economic and cultural phenomena in Solomon Islands society and the importance of empowering local communities to engage with those phenomena. It is necessary, therefore, to explore some of these connections and understand what they reveal about local communities and local institutions.

Economically, Solomon Islands was intended by Britain to be self-sustainable, however its isolation prevented significant expansion and, instead, tended to exacerbate unequal development across the different islands. The result forced many Islanders into selling their labour offshore and significant internal migration (Allen 2012; Bennett 1987). For decades the economy has been largely dependent on a small number of industries centred on resource extraction. The economy came to be dependent on timber, fisheries and palm-oil. Throughout the 1970s logging constituted, on average, 31.4 per cent of all exports, with fishing and palm oil making up 23.9 per cent and 4.6 per cent, respectively. By the 1990s, logging contributed 44.8 percent, and palm oil increased to 11.6. Fishing increased to 38.1 per cent in the 1980s before receding to a 26.5 per cent share of exports through the 1990s (Fraenkel 2004).

These industries were largely controlled by foreign interests with little input from, or benefit for, locals. Growth in these core industries often came at the expense of more traditional enterprise with crops provided by smaller-scale growers declining substantially over the same period. Copra's contribution to overall export earnings declined from 34.7 per cent through the 1970s to just 5.3 per cent through the 1990s (Fraenkel 2004). On the whole, economic development remains uneven or incomplete. Approximately 85 per cent of the population still reside in rural areas (Allen & Dinnen 2010) with around 75 per cent of the population dependent on primary production and subsistence agriculture (Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Economic Analytical Unit 2004).

In 1971, Solomon Islands Plantation Limited (SIPL) was established to extract palm-oil from a block of almost 1500 hectares on Guadalcanal. While the operation attracted an estimated 8,000-10,000 workers from outside of Melanesia, it provided little benefit to the Gule population who only owned 2 per cent of the company and received a small amount of rent for the land each year (Allen 2012; Kabutaulaka 2001). In addition, the rapid influx of migrant workers placed pressure on local societies and contributed to a severe breakdown of social bonds within landowning groups on Guadalcanal (Allen 2012).

Continued uneven development in the years following independence led many to question the makeup of the economy and its effect on Solomon Islands society. In 1992, Prime Minister Solomon Mamaloni stated that "our natural resources are rapidly being depleted, not for the welfare of those who own them but to finance a government system that is far remote from the masses." (qtd. in Kabutaulaka 2001).

In the absence of more effective national government and sustainable and reliable employment, indigenous governance systems continued to have a high degree of relevance to the lives of Solomon Islanders and, for many, remained the primary focus of their loyalty.² Foremost among these governance systems is *wantokism*, defined by Brigg (2009:152) as "a system of generalised obligations and supports that permeates contemporary Melanesian social and political life". Under the system, primary allegiances are to the more basic social units, namely kin groups, clans and tribes (Braithwaite et al. 2010). These patterns of reciprocity and interdependence define relations not only within the *wantok* (literally translated as *one-talk*) but also between different *wantoks*. Ride and Bretherton (2011:94-95) write:

An individual's daily life is determined by obligations to several layers of family, kin, and social networks. This begins with the inner circle of immediate family, then broadens to the extended family (laen or tribe, kin networks, sometime including peoples believed to be from the same ancestor/s) – and then further broadens to fellow members of their local community and language. The latter is often referred to as a "wantok" (one-talk), although wantok is used generally to refer to anyone with a familial or community connection with which a person has shared social origins and obligations.

The *wantok* system evolved from earlier forms of social organisation and grew out of a sense of commonality between family lineages and the desire to support one another as colonial rule

² Again, it is important not to idealise these systems or to portray them as the antithesis of more recent introductions. As Fraenkel (2004:12) writes, "What was initially introduced has been deeply and irreversibly absorbed, and has become as much a part of perceived custom as that which has some formal continuity with the age-old culture."

brought about new settings in which to do so. It is thus a relational term whose boundaries depend on the wider social context (Braithwaite et al. 2010). Brigg writes that the definition of one's *wantok* will expand or contract as one moves between the local village to the larger city or further to an international context. It is this adaptability that has allowed it to function at a number of different levels, from village affairs to national issues of conflict and reconciliation. While several observers have identified *wantokism* and other indigenous governance systems as obstacles to development and prone to corruption (Fukuyama 2008), more nuanced analyses have highlighted its centrality to building and strengthening social ties both within and across local communities (Brigg 2009). Negative portrayals of the *wantok* system stem from its association with another core tenet of Solomon Islands society; big-man politics.

Alongside traditional chiefs, priests and warriors, a central leadership figure in many Melanesian communities is the big-man.³ Big-men gain their authority by exercising strong leadership capabilities through which they can bring together different family lineages, mobilise resources, and distribute goods and services among the *wantok* (Braithwaite et al. 2010). While family lineage is important in the selection of a big-man, their approach to leadership and their commitment to the community's well-being are also important in gaining the required respect and authority over the group. Zimmer-Tamakoshi (1997:107) writes that "they singlehandedly command the labor, resources and hearts of followers (both male and female) through their unparalleled powers of persuasion and personal forcefulness." Their leadership, however, is not entirely authoritarian. In their discussion of land and leadership among the Kwara'ae people of Malaita, Burt and Kwa-ioloa (1992:31) describe that the sense of obligation and reciprocity are again central to leadership:

The leader wanted to let many people do things, because if he gave help to people they would help him in return and they would look up to him as their important head man. However, doing things depended upon seniority. So anyone who wanted to do something in the land must first be sure that they were born of man or born of woman of the leading clan of the land.

³ Keesing describes three different kinds of leadership in Melanesian societies: big-men, warrior-leaders and priests. Big-men played a key governance role in that their function was to distribute resources and maintain the *wantok's* livelihood. While big-men were important, Keesing argues that the role of warrior-leaders and priests has been under-valued by the literature. The role of the warrior-leader was to defend the *wantok* and act on its behalf in cases where reprisal actions needed to be taken against other groups. Strength and aggression characterised their leadership. Priests aimed to maintain a strong connection between the *wantok's* members and its ancestors. Outside of this, chiefly or hereditary systems are also evident in some communities and McDougall (2003) identifies and discusses the leadership role that women's groups have played in more recent times.

The ethos of reciprocity is similarly evident in the community-level decision-making processes, where big-men are required to facilitate consultation and discussion among the group. In the case of the Kwara'ae, big-man style leadership requires an ability to identify with their community and represent, rather than dictate, their views: "The person who was senior among these line descendants was called the leader of the clan or the head of the clan. It was this leader who spoke about things on behalf of his clan. But he could not decide by himself because he was just a part of his clan" (Burt & Kwa-ioloa 1992:17).

It is thus a system of localised and personalised loyalty that has, in recent years, come to infuse parliamentary politics and define the responsibilities associated with representation at the national level (Brigg 2009). There is an expectation among many that elected representatives will, in line with Melanesian customs of reciprocity and mutual obligation, provide benefits to their local *wantoks* in return for their support. In Solomon Islands, these benefits often come in the form of financial payments, paid to the representative by various logging and fishing interests and then passed on to the community (Braithwaite et al. 2010). It is here that several observers have identified *wantokism* and big-man leadership as a central cause of corruption and the basis of rent-seeking governments.

Others, however, see it as a dynamic system aimed at mediating between the broader political environment and the local village. Brigg (2009) rejects arguments that frame custom as a barrier to national development, highlighting that corruption is evident in many 'modern' institutions and not limited or endemic to customary societies. Under custom, respect and authority accrue to those big-men who not only generate wealth but distribute it in such a way that improves the overall well-being of the group (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1997). This brings with it expectations and obligations that regulate the practices of big-men and help to prevent the accumulation of wealth or power in one location. As Brigg (2009:157) writes: "The big-man's abilities and capacities can be realised only in a social network—and this same network also polices behaviour".

In addition to customary practices and identities, a number of other features define the socio-political space in Solomon Islands. A particularly significant one is that of the *Masta Liu*; the unique culture that has developed among (mainly unemployed) youth residing in Honiara as well as other Melanesian cities. Most have come from villages into Honiara to find employment but for a number of reasons, have failed to establish a stable income. Poverty is central to their urban existence and for some *Masta Liu* this leads to violence or crime. Jourdan writes: "Drifting in and out of jobs, in and out of hope, they are very often on the verge of delinquency" (Jourdan 1995:202). Adopting a unique fusion of indigenous and foreign cultural symbols, *Masta Liu* have carved out an identity that stems from and reflects their roots in social and economic

disadvantage. In times of conflict, they value masculinity and express their identity through aggression and competition. Their identity reflects elements of local *kastom*, such as warrior-like leadership, fused with Western imagery and symbols, and is often framed in opposition to the institutions of state power (Macintyre 2008).

The *Masta Liu* are the embodiment of a process of exchange and interaction that has taken place among many Solomon Islands communities over previous decades. Their fusion of customary and Western symbols highlights the ability of Solomon Islands communities to engage with and adapt to introduced cultures whilst maintaining a uniquely Melanesian identity. Their experience demonstrates the limited utility of fixed concepts of 'traditional' and 'modern' in Solomon Islands and thus highlights the importance of recognising the degree of fluidity and diversity that characterises communities across the Islands. During the Tensions, elements within the *Masta Liu* were to become a primary source of the hostility and aggression that drove the conflict. They can therefore be problematic for peace-builders who have little understanding of the culture of resistance that defines their identity (Braithwaite et al. 2010).

Like the *Masta Liu*, most communities within Solomon Islands have shown enthusiasm to borrow from introduced systems and cultures, in order to better engage with an expanding social and political sphere.⁴ Colonialism and economic development have provided a number of avenues for the introduction of these new ideas and symbols. However, two further sources have been the *Waku* community and the church. Both have been important actors in Solomon Islands recent history, especially in relation to the role they played during the Tensions.

Waku initially referred to the Chinese community but has more recently come to encompass the wider Asian community, including Malaysian, Filipino and Japanese immigrants, who are more recent arrivals in Solomon Islands. While the *Waku* community is diverse, it is divided more arbitrarily in terms of how it is viewed by Solomon Islanders. 'Old' Chinese are those who have resided in Solomon Islands for generations and who, according to locals, pay greater respect to Solomon Island traditions and culture (Moore 2008). 'New' Chinese do not appear to have the same respect from Solomon Islanders due to the perception that their wealth is a central cause of corruption and their ownership of the logging and fishing industries. In his discussion of the April 2006 riots, Moore (2008) highlights how this distinction between 'new' and 'old' shaped the rioters' behaviour, with many shops owned by 'old' *Waku* left untouched. Thus, the *Waku* identity carries a high degree of political significance in the Solomon Islands public space. The

⁴ Efforts have been made by some to resist the intrusion of 'modern' concepts into Solomon Islands culture. Most notable among these was the effort, under colonial rule, by the Moro Movement on Weather Coast which aimed to reject the encroachment of both the state and the church. The Movement was later mobilised by the Isatabu Freedom Movement during the Tensions, despite significant differences in philosophy between the two groups (Braithwaite 2010).

distinction between 'old' and 'new' *Waku* highlights the extent to which identity formation is a deeply political process, shaped by social and economic processes and sometimes vulnerable to simplistic constructions of boundaries and behaviour.

Religious groups are another important component of Solomon Islands society and one that has further contributed to its intricacy. Religious leaders have been key figures in Solomon Islands historically. Keesing (1985) outlines the role that priest-leaders have historically played among Kwaio communities in Malaita alongside others such as big-men and warrior leaders. He illustrates how, historically, priest-leaders helped secular leaders to mediate the relationship between a community and its ancestral linkages. Keesing (1985:248) writes that "Using such powers a descent group seeks to maintain its internal cohesion, preserve its external boundaries through peace and prestige-building exchange, and maintain the relations with ancestors on which stability, prosperity, and life itself depend," In more practical terms, priest-leaders served as dispute moderators and recently the church has come to be an important civil society actor.

Like priest-leaders before them, modern churches continue to act as a moderating force between the influences of the global and local and help to establish networks through which this process can be navigated. McDougall (2003:62) writes: "Not only is a church the centre of nearly every village community in Solomon Islands but churches also link local communities in island-wide, provincial, national, and regional networks." Their functioning during the Tensions provided further evidence of the ability of Solomon Islanders to indigenise introduced concepts and use them in ways that helped, in some ways, to resolve local issues. Groups such as the Melanesian Brotherhood and the Solomon Islands Christian Alliance worked to provide vital services during the fighting and facilitate early peace-building efforts (Zaku 2006). The involvement of the church in mediating conflict has been particularly significant for women who have traditionally found it difficult to access justice through formal dispute resolution mechanisms (Nagarajan 2009). Churches provide a less patriarchal environment for women to voice their grievances than some formal or customary mechanisms. McDougall's (2003) work examines the partnership between women's groups and the church in the village of Ranongga that aimed to bring about reconciliation between militants from Malaita and Guadalcanal. The effort represented an attempt to articulate a vision of community based on Christian fellowship and a narrative that could bring together diverse and disparate groups under a common set of beliefs (McDougall 2003). The importance of the church in modern times and of religious leaders historically, is evidence of an attempt to form links between local communities and transcendent identity discourses. It again highlights the dynamic relationship that has evolved

between modern and customary practices and the responsiveness of local cultures to introduced phenomena.

Conflict and Constructions during the ‘Tensions’

The many different actors and institutions that define Solomon Island communities makes the social and political climate a fluid one in which the interactions between different elements contributes to identities that are multi-layered and complex. It is in this environment of overlapping identities and sometimes divided loyalties that the primary conflict between the Isatabu Freedom Movement and the Malaitan Eagle Force emerged to shape the breakdown of law and order that occurred from 1998-2003. Much of the violence seen during the Tensions was centred around clashes between residents of Guadalcanal and settlers from Malaita.

However, such a simplistic description is of little value in explaining the intricacies of the conflict and far less for understanding the deeper political processes that undermined the state’s ability to function and local communities’ ability to contain the violence.

The Malaitan-Guale divide, or more specifically the political significance attached to it, has its roots in the colonial era. When the city of Honiara, on Guadalcanal, became the capital the employment and opportunities it provided exacerbated the already uneven development across Solomon Islands and saw northern Guadalcanal and some western islands develop much faster than others, namely Malaita (Allen 2012). This drove internal migration and the settlement of large numbers of Malaitans around the capital as well as other employment hubs, such as the SIPL operation and the Gold Ridge Mine. In many cases, migrants were able to settle on customary land and use informal land transactions to secure their residence on the island (Allen 2012). The sale of land was (and continues to be) a particularly contentious issue.

On much of the land on Guadalcanal ownership or custodianship flows along matrilineal lines (Kabutaulaka 2001). However, this did not prevent many Guale men selling land to migrants from other islands, often without consultation with the rightful owners. Such sales built up resentment from younger generations (who consider the land their birth right) and women, who rarely saw any benefit from the sales (Dinnen 2002; Kabutaulaka 2001). Intermarriage further complicated the issue with Malaitan men gaining ownership of land through their marriage to Guale women (Moore 2004). The tension that these land transactions created within *laens* (tribes) and *wantoks* was not insignificant. Allen writes: “It seems that the breakdown of relationships within landowning groups was just as pertinent to the land evictions as the disintegration of relationships between settlers and landowners.” (Allen 2012:174). With the expansion of Honiara and the squatter settlements that surrounded it, greater pressure was placed on land ownership. As Malaitan settlement became more

established and inequality worsened, the cleavage between settler and landowner gradually gained political salience.

Increasing inequality between residents of the different islands as well as sporadic acts of violence on Guadalcanal provided the conditions under which certain elements succeeded in restructuring representations of identity in Solomon Islands communities. While the Malaitan-Guale divide had some basis in political and economic realities, it was only with more concerted efforts by those in key positions of power that such a frame was able to take precedence over competing narratives of struggle in Solomon Islands. The issues facing Solomon Islands could have been framed in a variety of ways. Mamaloni's earlier criticism of "a government far remote from the masses" and an economy controlled by foreign interests aimed to highlight the hierarchy of power relations that kept Solomon Islanders close to the bottom. His emphasis was on the horizontal cleavages that prevented upward mobility and effective representation. The ethnic frame, centred on the Malaitan-Guale divide, was more vertical in nature in that it stressed the divisions *between* social groups. The frame became convenient for the more militant elements of the Guadalcanal and Malaitan communities who achieved political gain through the construction of a common enemy.

Kabutaulaka (2001) argues, however, that it was the media and the state who were more effective in cementing the ethnic lens as the primary explanation for the conflict. Throughout the conflict, both local and international media were reluctant or unable to go beyond this simple construction. Many foreign journalists had no experience of the Solomon Islands' political culture and faced pressure for headlines. While their intention may have been to convey, in a concise manner, the conflict to an international audience, they were, in effect, "constructing knowledge...about a group of people they had never met or spoken with." (Kabutaulaka 2001). Likewise, state actors in their handling of the violence preferred to use the ethnic frame as a way of distancing themselves from it and its underlying causes. By using terms such as "ethnic tension", "militants" and "criminals", successive governments aimed to de-contextualise the violence and, in doing so, deny that it was rooted in the failure of the governing elite to address uneven development and inequality across Solomon Islands (Kabutaulaka 2001).

Seemingly primordial distinctions allowed grievances to be divorced from their complex histories and instead connected to a much simpler overarching narrative. The adoption of the ethnic frame by both the media and the state amplified the claims of those who were already seeking to impose it on a diverse population. It gave those elements the ability to define the nature of grievances in Solomon Islands and, through this, mobilise the various strands of discontent and frustration under a common agenda.

A formal representation of Guale discontent came in 1988 with the release of “The Bona Fide Demands of the Indigenous People of Guadalcanal”. Drafted by a small group of public officers and politicians, the petition made a number of demands aimed at resolving both land and governance issues on Guadalcanal. They included: an immediate response to the murder of Guale residents allegedly by Malaitan settlers; the shifting of large-scale development projects away from Guadalcanal; the repatriation of settlers and greater restrictions on internal migration; registration of customary land; and, in line with the recommendations of the 1987 Constitutional Review Committee, a federal government allowing for greater Guale control over Guadalcanal (cited in Parliamentary Foreign Relations Committee 2009).⁵ Like the report of the Constitutional Review Committee, the petition was presented to parliament but never acted upon. The demands were again presented to the government following the rape of a Guale woman by Malaitan settlers in May 1998 but again were not acted upon (Parliamentary Foreign Relations Committee 2009). The continued marginalisation of Guale interests at the national level, alongside events such as the rape incident, served to further radicalise elements within the Guadalcanal population.

The sale of the government’s 30 per cent share in SIPL, a year earlier, had also angered the Guale community who wanted to see the share given to the Guadalcanal Provincial Government.⁶ The election in 1998 of former Prime Minister Ezekiel Alebua⁷ as Premier of Guadalcanal provided further incitement as he and other Guale leaders sought to gain political momentum through inflaming the Malaitan-Guale divide (Moore 2004). It was these short-term factors that served to bring long-term pressure and resentment to the fore in Solomon Islands political discourse.

In November 1998, Premier Alebua issued a demand for \$2.5m in compensation for the murder of 25 Guadalcanal residents by settlers and for the use of Honiara as the national capital. Veiled threats of violent reprisals were not taken seriously and the demands were again not acted upon.

⁵ A Constitutional Review Committee was established in 1987 to address some of the concerns. Alongside other changes, it recommended a federal governing structure for Solomon Islands. The recommendations, however, were never acted upon by the Parliament (Parliamentary Foreign Relations Committee 2009).

⁶ The government’s 30 per cent share was divided into two parcels. 20 per cent was sold to the British-owned Commonwealth Development Corporation while the remaining 10 per cent was to be administered on behalf of Solomon Islanders by the Investment Corporation of Solomon Islands (Kabutaulaka 2001).

⁷ Ezekiel Alebua was Prime Minister at the time the ‘Bona Fide Demands’ were initially presented as a petition in 1988. He took no action because he believed his proper role was to govern Solomon Islands as a whole and not seek to advance one group’s agenda against another (Braithwaite et al. 2010)

The culmination of the building tension was a campaign led by a group of Guadalcanal militants, known first as the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army (GRA) and later as the Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM),⁸ to forcefully evict the mainly Malaitan settlers from their land.

Isolated incidents between the groups had occurred over the preceding years but it was only in July 1998 that the situation descended into armed conflict. A raid on the police armoury at Yandina yielded a significant number of high-powered firearms which were then distributed across Guadalcanal (Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2012:58). Early violent episodes were concentrated in western Guadalcanal, particularly Tambea and Lambi Bay, where the influx of migrant workers had been particularly high. Malaitan houses, cars and businesses were targeted and road blocks were established to both control the movement of people and to intimidate. Raids on foreign-owned resorts were also common. Militant activity increased in March 1999 when militant Guale, Harold Keke and his brother Joseph Sangu, were released on bail (Moore 2004). By November 1999, a total of 35,309 people had been displaced by the violence (Fraenkel 2004).

The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF)⁹ responded aggressively. In December 1998, a Guadalcanal youth was shot dead by police and after 18 months of conflict 13 IFM militants had died. The IFM uprising was initially treated by the government as a small-scale insurgency; however, after ongoing clashes with the RSIP, a state of emergency on Guadalcanal was declared in June 1999. The government's initially dismissive approach combined with IFM deaths at the hands of the police encouraged young men to join the movement (Dinnen 2002; Kabutaulaka 2001). Not only did the IFM attract new recruits they managed to guide public opinion among Guale communities towards their cause. While many areas were unaffected and saw very little of the conflict, Kabutaulaka (2001) writes that "the general feeling throughout the island is that of agreement with the IFM."

The inconsistent response from central government also provided the IFM with some momentum. Braithwaite describes how the government faltered in its approach to dealing with the evictions, wavering between calls for greater dialogue and calls for greater force. The differing stances were regarded either as a sign of weakness or of a repressive state acting on behalf of Malaitan interests (Braithwaite et al. 2010).

⁸ The name change is significant in that it aims to fundamentally reframe the movement, altering its outlook from a forward-looking revolutionary movem

ent to a more primordial one, connected through ancestral linkages to Isatabu, the traditional name for Guadalcanal (Moore 2004). Harold Keke was particularly insistent that his followers should wear that traditional *kabiloto* and strictly adhere to customary law (Truth and Reconciliation Commission Solomon Islands 2012: 172).

⁹ Solomon Islands has no military force.

Late 1999 saw a number of peace efforts being made. The first, in line with *kastom*, was a reconciliation feast. While it aimed to address Guale grievances through traditional means, it was not attended by the IFM militants. A further effort was made in June 1999 when Fijian coup leader Sitiveni Rabuka and Nigerian Ade Adefuye were deployed as Commonwealth envoys. With the involvement of the IFM, they brokered the Honiara Peace Accord which called on the militants to renounce violence, recognise the legitimate grievances of the Guadalcanal community and pay compensation to those who had been forcefully evicted. The IFM's involvement, however, did not extend to signing the agreement and the eviction of Malaitans continued unchecked. A later effort, the Panatina Agreement in August 1999, reaffirmed the Honiara Peace Accord and called on renewed efforts to end the violence but, like the Accord and other Australian- and New Zealand-brokered efforts, had little effect on levels of violence (Braithwaite et al. 2010).

The failure of the government and international actors to bring the violence to an end saw a small group of Malaitans take up arms in defence of their homes and businesses. The formation of the Malaitan Eagle Force (MEF) in early 2000 led to a dramatic increase in tension. The MEF had close connections with the RSIPF and access to high-powered weapons and military-style equipment. As the fighting continued, the flight of non-Malaitan officers from the RSIPF intensified and its agenda became increasingly aligned with the MEF (Braithwaite et al. 2010; Dinnen 2002).

IFM bases in Honiara became the focus of Malaitan aggression, along with any who had sympathised with the Guadalcanal movement. In June 2000, the MEF, operating alongside elements of the paramilitary wing of the police force, seized a police armoury at Auki and placed the Prime Minister and Governor-General under house arrest. Spokesman and key negotiator for the MEF, Andrew Nori, demanded a new national leader be elected by the parliament after Prime Minister, Bartholomew Ulufa'alu, resigned following the coup (cited in Braithwaite et al. 2010). In the absence of six MPs who were allegedly threatened by MEF militants, Opposition leader, Manasseh Sogavare, was elected Prime Minister (Dinnen 2002).

Sogavare's compensation-before-reconciliation approach aimed to bring about a resolution to the conflict. The plan, however, was seen as heavily geared towards Malaitan interests, providing large sums of money to those who had been evicted from their land on Guadalcanal (Moore 2004).

In the months that followed the coup, the MEF effectively acted as "the government's alternative power base" (Moore 2004:138), taking control of Honiara and making incursions into IFM-held territory around the city. The government had little capacity to counter such a well-armed movement, and intimidation, destruction and violence worsened significantly. In many respects,

the RSIPF contributed further to the problem. High-ranking officers were actively involved in the planning and carrying out of the raids on police armouries and this provided the militant groups with the bulk of their high-powered weaponry. Other officers simply handed over their weapons. The force became increasingly factionalised and this made it difficult for frontline officers to carry out their work effectively. The findings of the Truth and Reconciliation (Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2012:80) highlight the collapse of authority and structure throughout the organisation:

Between 1998 and 2000 the RSIPF disintegrated. Ethnic allegiances ruined the professional codes and the loyalty the police officers [felt] towards the Force. Discipline and respect for rank faded away as executives were unable or unwilling to hold the institution together....

As the fighting intensified and battle lines between the IFM and MEF became more entrenched, the conflict began to have more serious implications for the rest of the country. Australia and New Zealand had already declined to intervene prior to the coup and the deployment of an Australian naval vessel to evacuate foreign nationals did little to quell the country's descent (Dinnen 2002). Government incapacity led to economic collapse with large-scale capital flight contributing further to the government's already precarious financial position. In 2000, government defaults on loans, a dramatic decline in exports and decreasing commodity prices led GDP per capita to drop by 18 per cent (Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Economic Analytical Unit 2004).

A Failed Peace and a 'Failed State'

As the situation endured through the early 2000s, ethnic tension gradually gave way to civil unrest and lawlessness. Rioting and looting came to characterise areas of Honiara and high-level corruption further inhibited an effective indigenous response. Some degree of reconciliation was achieved through the Townsville Peace Agreement signed in mid-2000. It called for the parliament to pass an Amnesty Act following the surrender of weapons by both sides. The repatriation of militants and compensation for those who had lost property were further components of the agreement. RSIPF officers who had joined the MEF, deserted or misused their power were free to return without fear of sanction. An International Peace Monitoring Team made up from other Pacific nations and a Solomon Islands Peace Monitoring Council would oversee these processes.

Like earlier attempts at peace, militant IFM leader, Harold Keke, did not attend. His absence made the MEF reluctant to genuinely embrace the process. A further absence was that of civil society groups. Church groups, NGOs, and women's association had been active up until this

time aiming to bring peace through local collective action (Leslie & Boso 2003; McDougall 2003). In Townsville, they were excluded in order to keep the focus on the militants and the violence.

The Townsville Peace Agreement did contribute to a reduction in fighting between the IFM and MEF. However, the more substantive issues relating to land, inequality and corruption continued to undermine law and order and hinder the reconciliation process. There were no provisions made for those outside Guadalcanal or Malaita. In addition, the MEF retained their strong links with the police force, notable militant Harold Keke was still at large and actively working against the peace process, and the population remained heavily militarised despite the efforts of the International Peace Monitoring Team (Dinnen 2002). Similar violence occurring in the Marau region also went unresolved.

A significant problem was the inability of both sides to control rogue elements within their ranks, for example Harold Keke. Initially a member of the IFM from the Weather Coast, Keke provided some degree of consensus between the MEF and IFM who both made efforts to capture him.¹⁰ Keke's disaffection was representative of a deeper rift within the IFM between elements from the Weather Coast and those from the north of the Island (Kabutaulaka 2001).¹¹ On the Malaitan side, there were clashes over claims to compensation, especially given the level of corruption (Moore 2004). A more difficult issue, especially for Malaita, was maintaining the image of a united front against Guale evictions. Kabutaulaka writes that "the existence of various groups within the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) (throughout the crisis) was a manifestation of deep divisions between Malaitans and the difficulties of constructing a homogenous Malaitan identity" and that events such as the burning of Andrew Nori's office were "further demonstration[s] of fragility of [sic] and temporariness of Malaitan ethnic mobilization." (Kabutaulaka 2001).

The fracturing of both the MEF and IFM served to challenge dominant perceptions of the conflict as being ethnically-based by highlighting the diverse interests and unique experiences of what were presented as united entities. A further element proving difficult to control was the *Masta*

¹⁰ Harold Keke, an IFM leader from the Weather Coast, formed the Guadalcanal Liberation Front with other elements from Guadalcanal who refused to sign the Townsville Peace Agreement. He was regarded as mentally unstable and responsible for up to 24 murders and an assassination attempt of Guadalcanal Premier, Ezekiel Alebua. He came to be seen as one of the most prolific spoilers of the peace process, especially following the kidnapping and murder of 7 Melanesian Brothers who had travelled to the Weather Coast to make peace (Braithwaite 2010).

¹¹ Following the Townsville Peace Agreement, an effort was made by the government to arm former militants from both the IFM and MEF as part of a 'Joint Operation' to capture Harold Keke. The effort went against the provisions of the Townsville Peace and only contributed to the problem on the Weather Coast (Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2012).

Liu with many benefiting from the lawlessness, by using weapons to extort payments and compensation from others. As members of the various militant groups, the *Masta Liu* “cherished their new status and guns as symbolising a degree of social power that was otherwise unthinkable and impossible” (Fraenkel 2004:119). The breakdown of law and order exacerbated their disillusionment and rewarded their aggression. The Tensions provided an environment in which they could give meaning to their culture of resistance.

As law and order continued to break down, the Malaitan-Guale divide became increasingly meaningless as an explanation of the conflict. The conflict’s unravelling demonstrated the multiple layers of grievances that stretched both horizontally and vertically across Solomon Islands. Social and political relationships continued to be undermined by the failure to address the underlying causes of the Tensions. In many respects, the conditions that led to violent conflict were exacerbated.

Throughout the conflict, no serious effort was put towards combating corruption; a central cause behind the erosion of trust between Solomon Island citizens and their government. While peace agreements aimed to include provisions for reconciliation through compensation (an approach in line with customary practices), many such provisions were exploited for financial gain. The Townsville Peace Agreement had aimed to accommodate former militants by paying allowances to them if they returned to Malaita, however, the scheme was prone to exploitation with many returning to Guadalcanal as a way of extorting money (Dinnen 2002). Prime Minister, Manasseh Sogavare, admitted in 2001 that up to S\$40m had been spent on fraudulent compensation payments (cited in Fraenkel 2004:122). The payouts to militants placed further pressure on the country’s finances and only served to give the ‘spoils of peace’ to those who posed the largest barrier to effective reconciliation. A further provision of the Agreement allowed for the appointment of former militants as ‘special constables’ within the police force. Again, this was abused with over 2000, mainly ex-MEF fighters, being appointed to the positions in just over a year (Braithwaite et al. 2010).

The corruption perpetrated by militants was only a part of the problem. Corrupt practices in the logging and fishing industries distorted economic incentives and undermined fiscal stability. More importantly, however, stories of militants and politicians receiving financial gain from the conflict served to deflate the optimism of the post-Townsville peace process. The government, due to the extent of its involvement in encouraging corrupt practices, became increasingly marginal to people’s visions of a peaceful future. As Fraenkel writes “Signs of hope existed, and the aspiration for change was far stronger than the ability to realise those hopes. But there existed no catalyst for top-level change. No circuit-breaker was available to decisively break the power of the militants.” (Fraenkel 2004:158).

Corruption also served to highlight the structural inequality that had created the conditions for violent conflict. Part of this was the perceived favouring of Malaitan interests over Guala by the government. As highlighted above, several provisions of the Townsville Peace Agreement allowed for Malaitan militants to benefit financially from the Agreement and to retain their positions in the RSIP. Fraenkel (2004:122) cites some notable examples, including the case of MEF member Andrew Fioga being paid a S\$100,000 compensation payment for “panel beating.”

The Agreement highlighted the extent to which the political agenda had been corrupted by militants on both sides, at the expense of a number of competing interests. Compensation payments indebteded the government to militant groups who were able to back up their ever-escalating demands with threats of violence (Dinnen 2002). The government’s fiscal position led to the collapse of vital services on other islands not involved in the conflict. All health services on Makira-Ulawa were suspended in 2001 and the education system on Isabel collapsed after teachers’ wages went unpaid (Dinnen 2002:294). It was becoming increasingly apparent that concerted efforts by the government and its international partners to bring an end to the violence would mean further marginalisation of those communities who had not resorted to violence. The Townsville process had seen the deliberate exclusion of civil society groups (Braithwaite et al. 2010) which led it to be described as “a militants’ charter” (Fraenkel 2004:101). As both the IFM and MEF cemented their influence in Honiara, the work put in by churches, women’s groups and the Civil Society Network often went ignored or neglected with the result that avenues of access to central government were constricted for many. In many respects their exclusion reflects the larger issues hindering the peace process. Allowing civil society involvement would have effectively been a concession that this conflict was about more than Malaita and Guadalcanal and that more deep-seated socio-economic and political issues were at its core.

Violence and disorder continued through the early 2000s as efforts to capture Keke failed. The RSIPF continued to decline in both professionalism and capacity as gangs took root in Honiara. Prime Minister Sogavare’s government lasted until the 2001 elections, when he was ousted by Sir Allan Kemakeza. Kemakeza promised an improvement to the law-and-order situation although his efforts remained handicapped by the divided loyalties and fractured nature of the police force. Episodes of murder and torture demonstrated that neither the police nor the MEF had a firm grasp on the security situation. Compensation payments arising from the Townsville Agreement further bankrupted the state, with corruption and dishonesty resulting in millions of dollars being wasted.

Increasingly, Solomon Islands came to be seen by the international community and other observers as a ‘failing’ or ‘failed state’ (Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs

and Trade Economic Analytical Unit 2004; Australian Strategic Policy Institute 2003; The Economist 2003; Wainwright 2003)¹². In April 2003, Sir Allan Kemakeza made another request for assistance from Australia. After having earlier dismissed as “folly in the extreme” the idea of Australian intervention in Solomon Islands, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, and his counterpart in New Zealand Phil Goff, were this time more willing to consider such action and went about laying the groundwork for a broad-based regional intervention.

The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands

Australia’s decision to intervene in Solomon Islands represented a reversal of its earlier reluctance to become too heavily involved in the conflict there (Boege 2008; Fry & Kabutaulaka 2008; Hegarty 2005). Events such as 9/11 and the Bali bombings had heightened concern regarding Australia’s leadership on issues of state instability in the region as well as fears over the possible infiltration of Pacific societies by terrorist groups (Fry 2008; Greener-Barcham & Barcham 2006). These concerns catalysed broader shifts occurring in the international community and pushed regional actors towards a more pro-intervention stance. While Australia and New Zealand had been part of this shift in other theatres, it was only in 2003 that such thinking was applied to a case in the Pacific (Boege 2008; Dinnen 2008; Hameiri 2009b).

A report produced around this time by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (2003) was influential in shaping the thinking on the Solomon Islands’ conflict and Australia’s response to it. The report, *Our Failing Neighbour: Australia and the Future of Solomon Islands*, began by outlining a wide range of threats posed to Australia by the Solomon Islands’ failure and argued that a continuation of the existing approach would fail to bring about a satisfactory solution for Australia’s economic, security and strategic interests. Due to these concerns, the report stressed urgency in devising a solution that would arrest Solomon Islands decline:

The point has now been reached that simply providing more aid to the Government in Honiara is unlikely to fix the problems, and could well end up exacerbating them, because the Solomon Islands Government is now incapable of using further aid effectively. So if we are to do more, we will need to become more deeply engaged on the ground ourselves. Continued reliance on the Solomon Islands Government alone means accepting state failure as the most likely outcome. (Australian Strategic Policy Institute 2003:7).

¹² Applying the ‘failed state’ label in Solomon Islands, and in other areas across the Pacific, has been highly contentious with many questioning the appropriateness of such a rigid measure in a context characterised by adaptability and cultural exchange. Dinnen writes: “These are not robust analytical devices and provide us with little insight into the circumstances of the states they seek to describe. That would require a much deeper understanding of the social and political dynamics that have shaped the historical development of particular states. (Dinnen 2008:340)”

In its recommendations the report developed a plan for Australian engagement in Solomon Islands focused on resolving the issues that led to the crisis while retaining Solomon Islands sovereignty and independence. A two-phase plan was outlined with the first aimed at addressing law and order and more immediate governance problems and the second taking a longer term approach in addressing the underlying grievances undermining effective statehood (Australian Strategic Policy Institute 2003:39-46). While the cost of such a commitment was high, the report identified a number of actors in the international community capable of providing support.

To avoid being seen as a neo-colonial power, preserving Solomon Islands sovereignty was considered central to any move by Australia to provide assistance. In the process of developing and mobilising the strengthened assistance package for Solomon Islands, gaining consent from the main actors both locally and regionally was central (Goff 2012). A meeting in July 2003 between Australian, New Zealand and Solomon Island officials led to the *Solomon Islands Government Policy Statement on the Offer by the Australian Government for Strengthening Assistance to Solomon Islands, 2003*, which outlined the nature of such support and the legal framework under which it would go ahead. The paper placed heavy emphasis on gaining clear consent from the Solomon Islands government for such assistance to be given and, in line with the Biketawa Declaration, signed in October 2000, called for the Pacific Islands Forum to play a lead role in the response (cited in Parliamentary Foreign Relations Committee 2009:19).

The Pacific Islands Forum approved the Australian government's plan but required a more formal request for assistance from Solomon Islands. Legislative changes from the National Parliament of Solomon Islands were also required in order to give full legal authority to the intervention. This came on 17 July 2003 with the unanimous passing of the Facilitation of International Assistance Act 2003 in the Solomon Islands Parliament. Final approval was given on 24 July 2003 with the signing of what became the 'RAMSI Treaty' that set out the scope of the mission, as well as its duration and other legal requirements relating to the arrival of assistance forces (cited in Parliamentary Foreign Relations Committee 2009:32). That same day, RAMSI personnel began arriving in Solomon Islands.

In many respects, RAMSI can be described as an archetypal state-building mission in that it places state capacity at the centre of its programme to build a sustainable peace. While the initial phase of the mission focused on restoring law and order to the capital and other unstable areas, latter stages have seen significant effort being put into more substantial restructuring of the Solomon Islands' political and economic institutions. The *Framework for Strengthened Assistance to Solomon Islands: Proposed Scope and Requirements* sets out both the short-term and long-term objectives of the mission. The report states:

Under civil order, the main task will be to re-establish security in Honiara, enabling government, business and the community to operate free of intimidation...It will be important to pursue economic reform policies to regain credibility within the international donor community, and to rebuild the essential machinery of government to support stability and delivery of services. (Australian Government 2008:1).

With time, noticeable changes in the mission's work became apparent as this shift in focus towards the longer-term governance issues took place. In 2009, the RAMSI Partnership Framework stated that the overall goal of the mission was:

A peaceful Solomon Islands where key national institutions and functions of law and justice, public administration and economic management are effective, affordable and have the capacity to be sustained without RAMSI's further assistance. (RAMSI & Solomon Islands Government 2009:6).

To implement such a broad mandate, RAMSI's work is divided into three pillars: 'Law and Justice', 'Economic Governance and Growth', and 'Machinery of Government'. Within these fields, tasks have been split into short-term priorities aimed at stabilisation and medium- and long-term strategies aimed at building local capacity and re-structuring the core features of Solomon Islands' governance.

Under the law and justice pillar, the immediate focus was placed on restoring security in Honiara and other unstable areas before shifting to the more long-term effort of rebuilding the RSIPF and strengthening its capacity. The goal of the 'Law and Justice' pillar was described in the RAMSI Partnership Framework as being the creation of "[a] secure, safe, ordered and just Solomon Islands society where laws are administered fairly regardless of position or status, giving due recognition to traditional values and customs" (RAMSI & Solomon Islands Government 2009:6).

Under 'Economic Governance and Growth', efforts in the short-term were directed at stabilising government finance while longer-term goals involved restoring confidence in the economy and encouraging economic growth. This required "A Solomon Islands achieving broad-based economic growth and a more prosperous society (including for those living in rural areas) supported by a fiscally responsible government which promotes sound economic policies." (RAMSI & Solomon Islands Government 2009:6).

In a similar way, improving the 'Machinery of Government' meant first increasing transparency then working to enhance the capacity of administrative and electoral institutions. The work has been framed as a technical exercise aimed at developing a public sector that is "strategic,

professional, transparent and accountable in the delivery of services and priority programs of the government of the day.” (RAMSI & Solomon Islands Government 2009:6).

This ‘Whole of Government’ programme for reforming the Solomon Islands state reflected regional concern over the potential for state collapse in Solomon Islands. It aimed to create the foundations for a stable peace by focusing its attention on the effectiveness and strength of the pillars of governance (Braithwaite et al. 2010). Re-establishing a strong central state was seen as the best defence against a resurgence of conflict and the further erosion of governance and development in Melanesia (Boege 2008). In its work, RAMSI aimed to maintain a difficult balance between carrying out fundamental reform of the basic tenets of governance in Solomon Islands and remaining a neutral presence in the political-economic space. By adopting such an ambitious mandate, RAMSI conceded that it was going beyond the manifestations of conflict to address what many saw as a fundamental crisis of governance in Solomon Islands. With no exit timetable, the strengthened assistance package aimed, in the words of Australian Prime Minister John Howard (qtd. in Braithwaite et al. 2010:51), to “re-engineer” the machinery of government and development so as to establish peace through an effective and legitimate nation-state.

RAMSI and the Participating Police Force

Where RAMSI differs from many other state-building missions of its kind is in its personnel. Rather than being led by a military contingent, RAMSI has from the beginning been a police-led operation, led by the Australian Federal Police with input from regional partners. As discussed earlier, police forces have come to play a greater role in peacekeeping missions internationally and the deployment of a Participating Police Force to Solomon Islands represents a further development in the evolution of this peace-building practice. While a sizeable military contingent played an important role stabilising the security situation in the early stages of the deployment, they played only a supporting role in the more substantive work of peace-building as the mission progressed.

The approach of the PPF mirrored RAMSI’s three-phased plan with the initial stabilisation effort followed by the more substantive work of re-building communities and reforming the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF). The first phase saw a 300-strong Participating Police Force, supported by a military contingent of 1,700, move to re-establish security on the streets of Honiara and protect key government officials, including the Prime Minister. In a shock-and-awe style approach, the PPF and military contingent presented “a united ‘show of force’ where they made it known to the gangs that they would no longer be allowed to go rampant and unchallenged” (Australian Federal Police 2005). This “crucial environment of compliance”

allowed for other short-term peacekeeping work including weapons collection, arresting militant leader Harold Keke and securing the Weather Coast, and re-establishing internal discipline within the RSIPF (Australian Federal Police 2005). While these early efforts achieved a high degree of success, there was a recognition among policy-makers that embedding peace and re-establishing good governance would be a longer-term project.

RAMSI's open-ended commitment to Solomon Islands was made clear by a number of actors at the time of its deployment. Australian Prime Minister John Howard stated during a visit to Honiara in 2003 that "RAMSI will remain until the job is done" (New Zealand Herald 2003). Likewise, his New Zealand counterpart, Prime Minister Helen Clark, stressed that "It is going to take time to build a police force that can really deal with the bad elements of the Solomon [Islands]" (cited in New Zealand Herald 2003). Such a commitment meant that the work of RAMSI and the PPF went beyond short-term security goals to engage the more substantive issues driving conflict and undermining good governance in Solomon Islands.

The approach was summarised by the Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police, who stated in 2004:

If we are to restore law and order over the longer term, it is no good just removing guns from the streets. You have to create an environment in which the social, political and justice systems can function properly, with the right powers, restraints and checks and balances to enable the community to have confidence and business to thrive. (Australian Federal Police 2005).

RAMSI's shift in approach saw PPF members serve as both mentors and 'in-line' police officers working on Solomon Islands' streets to inculcate a new sense of police professionalism in the RSIPF and build trust within communities. The extent of corruption and criminality within the RSIPF meant that PPF officers conducted much of the everyday policing in the early years of the intervention. An agreement between RAMSI and the Solomon Islands Government provided for these 'in-line' PPF officers and meant that "RAMSI police were not just advisers, but could conduct investigations and make arrests. (Warner 2004)".

Inserting PPF officers into these 'in-line' positions was necessary, Warner (2004) argued, to ensure a stable law and order situation and allow for capacity to be built within the RSIPF over time. The arrangement gave greater responsibility to PPF officers and added a considerable degree of significance to their role. While RAMSI comprised a range of police, military and civilian actors, it was the PPF that became the face of the peace-building mission in Solomon Islands' communities. As the 2010 Annual Performance Report stated: "Of all RAMSI programs

the PPF/RSIPF partnership is the most visible and is what most Solomon Islanders understand by 'RAMSI'.

The RAMSI website (RAMSI 2012) outlines the five core goals for PPF officers during this phase and describes those goals in the following way:

1. **Law and order:** Assisting the RSIPF to maintain a safe and peaceful Solomon Islands.
2. **Build community confidence:** Improve public demand for better rule of law outcomes across Solomon Islands, and support the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force to provide a secure Solomon Islands where crime and violence are managed by police and the justice system in an accountable way.
3. **Improve the RSIPF organisation:** Build the foundations of an effective, accountable and appropriate police service for the people of Solomon Islands.
4. **Safeguard borders and natural resources:** Assist the RSIPF and other relevant authorities to develop capacity to safeguard the borders and natural resources of Solomon Islands.
5. **Support traditional justice:** Establish and provide support for traditional justice processes which maintain order and accountability in inaccessible areas of Solomon Islands.

Before being deployed there in 2003, New Zealand Police Inspector Brent Holmes provided a brief account of the PPF's role as being: "getting the police back up and running again, getting the population on side, community policing and general crime." (qtd. in New Zealand Herald 2003).

Inspector Holmes' summary, as well as the goals listed above, highlight an important aspect of the PPF's mandate, namely the centrality of community confidence to the task of re-establishing security in Solomon Islands and re-building the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force. In the first instance, the PPF had to act as a police force, ensuring safety and security for Solomon Islanders, by working alongside and, in some cases, in place of local police officers. Beyond this, its work extended to the organisational reform of the RSIPF and wider justice system where the longer-term project of mentoring and training former officers and new recruits took place. Alongside both of these, however, was the community element, or what Inspector Holmes describes as "getting the population on side", involving work to re-build trust and bridge the divide between the Solomon Islands people and their Police. This community element is significant and indicates that "community-oriented" policing style was to be the primary philosophy underlying the work of the PPF. A clear effort was made to avoid the use of more coercive policing methods and adopt a more open and responsive relationship with the local community. The Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police's statement in 2005 illustrates this philosophy: "We made the decision to go unarmed so we could demonstrate to the local people that our officers were there to reassert the moral legitimacy of the state with the backing of the rule of law, rather than through the use of violence." (Australian Federal Police 2005). This community-oriented approach also meant establishing a police presence in remote communities and

building trust through regular face-to-face contact and high levels of interaction with the local population (Greener 2009:60).

In recent years, the focus has been on instilling a similar 'community-oriented' approach to policing within the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force. The 2009 Partnership Framework lists "Building greater community confidence in the RSIPF" and "Building broad community crime prevention and problem-solving capability" as two of its primary strategies for improving the capacity and professionalism of the RSIPF (RAMSI & Solomon Islands Government 2009:15).

The use of a community-oriented policing model under RAMSI reflects the experience that the mission's primary architects, Australia and New Zealand, have had with the community policing model in their domestic settings. As a model for crime control in urbanised Western societies, the model has attained a considerable degree of popularity since first being implemented in the 1970s and 1980s. Interesting and important questions emerge, however, when it is included within a context such as post-conflict Solomon Islands and employed for the purpose of building peace. Such a mandate gives considerable responsibility and scope to the work carried out by officers of the Participating Police Force. As will be described in the following chapter, community-oriented policing styles broaden the police role; shifting the focus away from coercion and towards consultation and, through this, allowing for a more close relationship to develop between officer and citizen. In most cases, the model favours a decentralised policing structure that enables officers to establish local connections and better respond to public concerns. While this can have a significant effect locally, its use here in the context of a post-conflict peace-building mission means that it will also have significant implications nationally, regionally and internationally. This research aims to reveal more about the interface between PPF officers and members of the local community, with a particular focus on how that relationship affects, and is affected by, the wider socio-political context outlined above. This involves examining the dynamics of police-led community engagement in a post-conflict setting and how this setting affects the work of the officers who carry it out.

Conclusion

While the violent conflict that defined the Tensions was reasonably localised, it drew from an array of socio-economic and political conditions that were much more expansive. It is only when the conflict is placed into historical context, taking into account these wider social and political processes at play, that its complexity and its diversity can be fully understood. Here it can be seen that the Tensions, a conflict ostensibly between rival ethnic groups, had its roots in a myriad of grievances involving a wide range of actors and influences. For police peacekeepers attempting to encourage effective reconciliation and a sustainable resolution to the conflict, the

discussion has raised several important points about the nature of the conflict and its relationship to the wider political culture in Solomon Islands. Taking these into consideration allows peace-building efforts to be placed into context and, through this, be better adapted and more responsive to local political and economic realities.

Firstly, Solomon Islands political culture, in which the conflict is deeply embedded, is characterised by a dynamic interaction between a variety of competing and complementary processes. In evaluating such societies, it is tempting to allow rigid conceptions of traditional and introduced practices to shape the boundaries of the discussion. A better understanding can be gained without such simplistic categorisations. This involves paying greater attention to the development of the political sphere over time and giving consideration to its fluidity as well as its capacity for interaction and exchange. Solomon Islands experience since independence has seen the infusion of national politics with local customary practices, such as the *wantok* system of communal relations. While in some respects the Westminster Parliament set up by British colonial administrators was a foreign governing system, it could not be insulated from the norms of political behaviour that pervaded Solomon Islands society. Tenets of the *wantok* system and big-man politics have adapted to new centres of power and come to shape conceptions of representation and leadership at the national level. Other civil society actors have also played a part in this interaction. Churches, for example, have helped to facilitate this process, not only by strengthening relationships between communities, but also by acting as intermediaries between national and international processes and local context. The intertwining of customary practices with modern ones demonstrates, Hameiri (2007:419) writes, that custom “is not a fixed entity, somehow external to social interaction...it is contested and regularly invoked to legitimize a range of often conflicting political ends”. The nature of this exchange means that governing coalitions are fluid and locations of power are constantly shifting. However, this process has allowed for Solomon Islanders to exercise a degree of ownership over introduced systems by bringing them into line with the character of local power arrangements.

Developing effective conflict resolution mechanisms to achieve a durable resolution to the Tensions requires that the events of 1998-2003 be regarded, not as separate from, but tightly bound up in the intricacies of the Solomon Islands unique political culture. This means looking beyond simplistic, short-term explanations of the conflict to find the deeper socio-economic trends that have shaped political behaviour and political outcomes in the lead-up to the Tensions. The violence was at its most severe between the militant factions of Malaitan and Guale populations. However, the Malaitan-Guale divide was only one aspect of the conflict and the division itself disguises the diverse interests that made up both groups and the unique

circumstances that brought them together. The conflict's ethnic dimension represented an effort by certain individuals to unite various strands of grievances under a banner that would carry political significance. The centrality of this frame was reinforced by the media and by the state who were unable, or unwilling, to look for a more detailed understanding of the conflict and its history. The continuation of violent conflict, even as both militant groups fragmented, illustrates the unhelpfulness of such distinctions in highly contested political spaces. More nuanced accounts of the conflict have identified historical processes of uneven development and unresolved land issues as well as narrowing avenues to central government and the marginalisation of youth as among the many factors that limited the ability of well-established mechanisms for containing violence in Solomon Islands communities.

Acknowledging the myriad of factors that contribute to ethnic fractionalisation and the outbreak of conflict is an important step for peace-builders and police peacekeepers seeking to devise durable solutions. Like the conflict itself, the peace process will need to be a deeply political exercise that stretches both horizontally and vertically across the Solomon Islands political sphere. A high level of community involvement is required in this process. The challenge in Solomon Islands is to move beyond the ethnic divide and instead address the diversity of political and economic interests at play. Unlike earlier efforts, the Townsville Peace Agreement focused the peace process on the militants, instead of encompassing the wide range of civil society actors who had helped to mediate the conflict and whose involvement would be crucial for future development. With their emphasis on addressing the grievances of the IFM and MEF these efforts continued to inflate misconceptions about the conflict's ethnic basis and its centrality to Solomon Islands as a whole. Allowing diverse input into the peace process requires a solution that can accommodate fluidity without falling victim to manipulation. This is important for preventing the conflating of separate and unique grievances under overarching narratives that emphasise division and suspicion. Peace-building must work to address the various strands of grievances that created the Tensions as well as the multiplicity of social and political actors, and the multiple layers of people's loyalties. These hallmarks of the conflict were demonstrated in its unravelling and need to be addressed if a sustainable resolution is to be found.

The intention here has been to demonstrate the intricacy and fluidity of the socio-political space in which PPF officers are required to operate. The discussion provides an introduction to the complexity of the task faced by the PPF and RAMSI in establishing peace and building community capacity in Solomon Islands. The important question now concerns the compatibility between the community described here and the approach being adopted by those at the forefront of the peace-building effort. Understanding how the PPF and their community-

oriented approach may help or hinder the search for peace in this environment is central to answering this. It is this relationship and the ability of police officers from another state, nation, culture and social setting to adjust and adapt to this reality that is the focus of this research.

Community Policing in the 'Foreign Policy Space'

The previous chapter aimed to go some way towards outlining the diversity and intricacy of local communities and cultures, the events leading to the outbreak of violence in 1998 and the wide-ranging international assistance package aimed at restoring peace and re-establishing statehood in Solomon Islands. More importantly, however, it aimed to identify the rather unique context that police officers of RAMSI's Participating Police Force find themselves in at the centre of a myriad of local, national and international actors and influences.

With this in mind, the focus now shifts towards learning more about how they operate within that context and understanding some of the potential implications of their work within it. To do this requires an analytical framework that helps to isolate that interface at the centre of this research; that is, the one between international police officers and members of the host society. Rather than continue the literature's current focus on the global implications and normative dimensions of international post-conflict policing, this research aims to focus more exclusively on the local level dynamics and, through this, learn more about the experience of individual police officers deployed in such a role. While the existing literature on international post-conflict policing provides some useful insights, the intention here is to borrow from a different literature that focuses more intently on the relationship between a police force and the community in which it operates; that is, the community policing literature. The community policing literature is valuable firstly for the fact that much of the PPF's work is informed by the community policing model, as practiced in Australia and New Zealand. More importantly, however, it provides a useful analytical lens for understanding some of the complexities and challenges for police officers as they attempt to engage citizens and build communities. It is this insight that makes the literature particularly valuable for an examination of RAMSI's PPF as they enter into fragile and remote Solomon Islands communities with the task of restoring peace and re-building a nation-state.

In this chapter, two sets of literature relevant to the study of international policing are reviewed. The first surrounds the development and operation of the community policing model and draws upon a wide range of studies conducted around the world regarding its effectiveness and efficiency as a model for crime control. This literature describes the socio-political context that shaped its development, outlines its core characteristics and overarching goals, and provides a framework for analysing and understanding its effectiveness as a model for engaging the community on issues of social order. The second set of literature forms a part of a wider literature on international policing and peacekeeping but focuses more directly on issues

associated with engaging the local community. Considered together, these literatures raise questions about the transition process that occurs when police officers, experienced in engaging their local community using a well developed model, are deployed to maintain order and build peace in a very different community.

Policing Models and Professionalism

Modern policing strategies, at least those in the West, can be grouped into three quite distinct eras: the political era, the reform era and the community-oriented era (Kelling & Moore 2005). The first developed policing model, the political era, emerged with the introduction of modern police forces into urban centres in the mid-1800s (Kelling & Moore 2005). It is known as the political era of policing because it was defined by a close relationship between officers and local political leaders. Political leaders could keep officers employed and prevent significant change within the department. In return, officers provided political support by encouraging their respective communities to vote certain ways and, in some cases, rigging elections (Kelling & Moore 2005). Departments adhered to a quasi-military, centralised command structure, although, with the division of cities into precincts, were reasonably decentralised in their everyday functioning. The primary tactic for dealing with crime was foot patrol and it was through this that ties to the local neighbourhood were developed and strengthened. Face-to-face contact meant police could be provided with information and insights directly by the community. Recruitment from the local area further contributed to this tight relationship. Despite this close proximity to the community, priorities and problems continued to be defined by the political elite. Thus, it was this relationship between politicians and police, rather than police and the community, that defined this era of policing.

Over time, significant weaknesses began to emerge in this political model. The close relationship between police and politicians inevitably led to police corruption. Decentralised organisational structures aided the spread of corruption by failing to provide administrators with the oversight needed to combat such activity. In addition to this, close relationships with the community often meant close identification with a particular section of that community, with white, upper class neighbourhoods being the primary benefactors. For minority or lower class neighbourhoods, this meant discrimination and inadequate protection from their local police (Kelling & Moore 2005).

Out of these failures emerged a new model, in the early 1940s, which was known as the reform or professional model (Goldstein 1990; Kelling & Moore 2005). Skolnick and Bayley (1988) describe the period from the 1920s through to the 1960s as the Tranquil Period of policing in the United States. By this they mean that police affairs attracted relatively few headlines and did

not feature as major public policy issues. The reform model that characterised policing during this time was defined by a strong commitment to the application of the rule of law. In reaction to the corruption that plagued the political model, the reform model stressed the need for an apolitical, unbiased force and aimed to achieve this through strong centralised decision-making, tight organisational structures, and a heightened sense of individual responsibility among officers.

In operational terms, various attempts were made to isolate officers from political influences and prevent too close a relationship developing with the population they controlled (Kelling & Moore 2005). Greater integration of new technology and higher standards for recruitment and training further contributed to the development of a standardised and highly professionalised policing style. Police professionalism under the reform model was exhibited through the distance between the police and the community so as to maintain the image of a police officer as a specialist in the field of law enforcement. The civilian was regarded as a passive recipient in the effort to preserve social order.

Within police departments, the reform model saw a hierarchical management structure develop so as to ensure policing activity could be controlled by a central authority. Architects of the model, including Berkeley Police Chief August Vollmer and Director of the FBI J. Edgar Hoover, sought to create officers with a strong commitment to equal protection under the law.

This detached form of policing narrowed the mandate of police departments by keeping officers in cars and placing a high priority on responding to incidents quickly and efficiently. As Kelling and Coles (1996:163) write, the approach became one that revolved around dealing with issues as and when they arose: "A chronic neighbourhood quarrel erupts: police respond. It erupts again: police again respond. And so on. In practical terms for police, incidents have neither a history nor a future".

The 1950s saw the growth of academic research into policing practice. In many ways, this research served to challenge idealised perceptions of policing within both police departments and the broader public. Goldstein (1990) identifies a number of weaknesses with the reform model that began to emerge with the social upheaval of the 1960s. His primary concern was that the reform model aimed to respond to a wide range of criminal behaviour, and other activity the police have to deal with, with a very generic approach. As described earlier, the focus of policing during this time was on remaining professional and detached. Goldstein also highlighted how a preoccupation with means over ends often meant the quality of the service delivered to the public deteriorated. It also meant that policing was predominantly reactive in that responding to emergency calls dictated the allocation of police resources. The narrow focus on responding to calls meant that both the community and rank-and-file officers were bypassed in terms of

their input into policy decisions and priorities. The community were thus the subject of police policy, rather than a contributor towards it. As Goldstein (1990:22, emphasis in original) writes: "What the police did was done *to* a community rather than *for* it." Likewise, street level officers had little say in how they carried out their job. They were expected to act as "automatons" but, according to Goldstein (1990:27), "constantly complain[ed] that they [were] treated like children; they want[ed] desperately to be recognized as mature adults". A further component of this was that promotion was often based on conformity to department policy, as opposed to innovation or initiative. Goldstein's final criticism grows out of this exclusion of rank-and-file officers and concerns the limits of piecemeal reform. Because many of the changes were carried out in an incremental fashion, they often failed to take into account the resistance of the officers who had to implement the change. The failure to recognise the complexity and intricacy of the police subculture meant that the model struggled from the very beginning.

The problems that began to emerge served to highlight some of the potential shortcomings of the reform model. However, it was only with the ending of the so called Tranquil Period of policing that the weaknesses of the reform model gained the attention of policy makers.

Reform policing was undermined throughout the 1960s by the dual processes of declining police performance and rising levels of fear among the community (Kelling & Moore 2005). During the 1960s, crime rates in the United States and other Western nations began to rise with new levels of social disruption plaguing urban communities. The narrow focus of the police on responding to calls and dealing with them in an isolated fashion made policing inefficient and costly. Significant increases in budgets and the introduction of new technology and equipment had little effect (Kelling & Moore 2005). Rioting in Los Angeles, Chicago and New York, as well as other major US cities, throughout the mid-1960s served to highlight the police's inability to effectively control crime and disorder. They also contributed to rising fear. While crime rates and fear did not always correspond, Kelling and Moore (2005) describe how a heightened sense of fear meant citizens abandoned public spaces because of the growing disorder.

It was during this time that the issue gained the attention of policy-makers at the highest level. *The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice* (The Crime Commission Report) and the *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (The Kerner Commission) reflected the scale of concern about the effectiveness of the police in the United States. Race and inequality were identified as key issues of concern. The Crime Commission Report (cited in Skolnick & Bayley 1988) highlighted hostility towards the police, particularly among black communities, as a key contributor to their growing sense of weakness. This point is also highlighted by Kelling and Moore (2005), who argue that the increased

momentum of civil rights protests at this time served to challenge the legitimacy of the police, especially among minorities and young people, but also among the general public.

The Kerner Commission (cited in Skolnick & Bayley 1988) went further to identify the deeper structural problems that plagued American society and how these were expressed in the criminal justice system. The conclusion of the report was unequivocal: “Our nation is moving towards two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal” (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders 1968:1). Disparities in incomes and sentences, out-of-date prison facilities and ‘assembly-line justice’ in lower courts were all identified as contributing factors to the sense of social decay that arose during this time. Policing tactics were identified as a factor that contributed to the intensity of the riots, however, they were also seen as part of the broader problem of racial hostility. The report described how perceptions of the police within urban African-American communities were intensely negative, with many regarding the police as an instrument of white supremacy based on double standards and excessive brutality. In response, the Commission recommended a raft of measures aimed at establishing a closer relationship between the organs of local government and the people it served. Regarding the police, the report suggested reviewing and improving policing in the ghetto and establishing mechanisms for responding to the community and addressing grievances. These changes had to be embedded within a whole-of-society response aimed at remediating the underlying social and political cleavages that fuelled the disorder.

A similar reflective process occurred in Britain, although slightly later. The 1981 Brixton Riots served as a catalyst driving police reform there. As in a large number of suburbs and cities across the world at this time, Brixton suffered from a range of problems, including deep social cleavages along racial lines and a lack of public confidence in the police (Lord Scarman 1982). Lord Scarman (1982) was tasked with investigating the riots and identifying their underlying causes. His report found racial cleavages to be the central cause of the rioting. However, the style of policing in Brixton was also highlighted as a key contributing factor. Lord Scarman identifies six common criticisms voiced by the public regarding policing in the area of Brixton most affected by the riots: racial prejudice; harassment and abrasive treatment of the public; unimaginative and inflexible policing styles; over-reaction to the disorder; a lack of urgency; and a failure to deal with looting. In a similar way to inquiries in the US, the Scarman report found racial tension and police ambivalence to be a primary driver of the violence in London. The use of “hard policing” methods was identified as a key weakness of policing strategies in Brixton and elsewhere, and seen as evidence that declining confidence in the police stemmed more from the overall policing approach than individual cases of misconduct.

The police's inability to address racial inequalities in Britain was both a cause, and a consequence, of declining local confidence in the police. These failures left Lord Scarman (1982:79) with "no doubt that a significant cause of the hostility of young blacks towards the police was loss of confidence by significant sections, though it cannot be assumed by all, of the Lambeth public in the police." The Report's conclusion stressed that the police are not the cause of racial disadvantage but must be forever conscious of their role in potentially perpetuating it. Such recognition was not catered for within the current policing model.

In calling for a new approach, the Report argued that "[i]f they [the police] neglect consultation and cooperation with the local community, unrest is certain and riot becomes probable" (Lord Scarman 1982:210). The Scarman Report came to be a key driver of change in Britain's approach to modern policing (Bennett 1994). From the mid-1980s through the early 1990s, Britain, the United States and many others began to develop a new model that aimed to bridge the distance between police and urban minorities whilst maintaining police professionalism and integrity.

Community Policing

Community policing represents the combination of a number of ideas aimed at improving police-society relations and addressing the underlying causes of crime in urban communities.¹³ As has been described, reform policing focused on the application of criminal law through such measures as deterrence, incapacitation and a degree of distance between police and community (Eck & Rosenbaum 1994). Community policing stresses a greater degree of flexibility, responsiveness and, above all, more involvement of the community in crime control and the maintenance of social order.

¹³ Community policing is used here as an umbrella term to encompass a number of trends that were all moving in the same general direction, that is, towards a more inclusive policing strategy. One important distinction should be made, however, between community policing and another emerging model gaining popularity at this time: problem-oriented policing. Problem-oriented policing has very similar goals to community policing and employs many of the same policing strategies. The model was developed by Herman Goldstein and, like community policing, is an attempt to learn from the failures of previous models. Its key point of difference, however, is that rather than identifying a lack of community involvement as policing's primary weakness, problem-oriented policing highlights the incident-focused approach of reform policing as the primary reason for its failures. Goldstein's model aims to address the problems that underlie incidents, rather than just the surface expression of them. This involves identifying the main drivers of crime in a community and shifting the focus of policing towards solving them, rather than responding to them. Problems are defined as a cluster of similar incidents, a unit of police business, or a substantive community concern. Thus, problem-oriented policing is very similar to community policing but some problems may not necessarily require community involvement in order to solve. While they can, and often do, embody aspects of one another, the key point is they do not have to. Problem-oriented policing may involve input from the community, but does not rely on it as its primary reference point, as with community policing.

For many neighbourhoods, community policing began as an experiment: small teams of officers were given the task of engaging the community on issues related to crime and social disorder in the local area. For this reason, however, no specific doctrine of community policing has been developed, making the concept difficult to identify and define. Kelling and Coles (1996:158) write that “community policing has come to mean all things to all people.” Different departments use different strategies to improve their relationship with the community and they have different motivations for doing so. While this reflects a degree of flexibility in the model, it also means that no one programme can be said to be a ‘pure’ community policing programme. However, several broad traits can be identified across many programmes that help demonstrate what the concept means at the policy-, management-, and street-level.

In attempting to identify and separate out the different elements to an effective community policing model, much of the literature has come to rely on the framework developed by Cordner (1996,2005). Cordner identifies four core dimensions of community policing; the philosophical, strategic, tactical, and organisational dimensions. These dimensions help to outline the nature of a community policing approach even though specific programmes or models may vary in practice. They also demonstrate that community policing is a whole-of-department approach that requires some degree of implementation across the entire police organisation.

The philosophical dimension describes the underlying principles driving a police department’s operation and the extent to which these allow for and encourage community engagement. The philosophical dimension is an important one as it indicates the extent to which community policing is driven by a genuine desire to involve the community. Re-orienting department philosophy requires a fundamental change in the way police think about and perform their work in the community “toward a more open and democratic orientation, and a redefinition and broadening of the police role” (Roberg 1994:250).

Where previous models of policing considered law enforcement to be a police matter, community policing considers the issue in a much wider context, taking into account the range of actors associated with and affected by the problem. In effect, community policing requires that policing becomes ‘de-professionalised’ and ‘de-specialised’ in the sense that the community are encouraged to take on some of the tasks associated with maintaining law and order. In an ideal sense, community policing aims to develop “self-regulating, self-sufficient communities where levels of crime and disorder are contained by the efforts of local residents and local institutions” (Eck & Rosenbaum 1994:8). This involves encouraging communities to be organised and informed about their neighbourhoods and be active in attempts to resolve disturbances or problems and requires that the community take on a greater role in identifying problems and developing solutions (Friedman 1994).

Observers stress that community policing is not a panacea and so expectations should be adapted to local context. Glaser and Denhardt (2010:310) describe community policing as “the co-production of public safety”. Likewise, Tilley (2003:315, emphasis in original) argues that “Community policing stresses policing *with* and *for* the community rather than policing *of* the community.”

There are a number of ways this philosophical shift can be exhibited, however, Cordner highlights three that are critically important: citizen input, broad function and personal service. Citizen input refers to the soliciting community involvement in police operations and is often achieved through community surveys, advisory boards, or town meetings. Broad function facilitates this by encouraging officers to look beyond their traditionally-defined role in order to engage with concerns raised by citizens. Personal service also plays a role by establishing a rapport between community members and officers and allowing flexible responses to community concerns rather than bureaucratic ones. These practices help to convey the image of an open and responsive police department to the local community. If implemented effectively they should embody a new policing philosophy that allows for a more interactive relationship between officers and citizens.

The strategic dimension of community policing is described by Cordner as the components of a programme that translate department philosophy into action. Important strategic elements of a community policing approach are re-oriented patrols, prevention emphasis, and geographical focus. Re-oriented patrols and a geographical focus should aim to foster a more personal relationship between officers and the areas they work in. Many departments internationally have reinstated foot patrols as a way of increasing the number of face-to-face contacts officers have with those in the community. Foot patrols formed the basis of police strategy in both Singapore and Japan (Skolnick & Bayley 1988). Neighbourhood meetings and the opening of new mini-stations have also been used as ways of bringing the police closer to the community, and vice versa. Mini-stations or outposts have been popular in Detroit (USA), Australia, Norway, Singapore and Japan where they are used to “extend, deepen and personalize interaction” with the local community (Skolnick & Bayley 1988:11).

It is believed that a policing approach can become more responsive if efforts are concentrated on developing local solutions to local problems. Toch and Grant (2005:288) highlight the importance of local input into policing programmes: “Community policing is by definition local because that is what communities are.” Locally-sourced ideas are believed to be more durable and more effective than those developed centrally by the police administration. Patrols that engage citizens at the street-level are believed to make policing more efficient and effective (Cordner 2005). There are a number of practical benefits that flow from a close relationship.

The community can become 'the eyes and ears' for the police and the police can encourage greater vigilance by providing information on wider criminal trends (Schneider 1998). Glaser and Denhardt (2010:310) explain that, through such day-to-day contacts with citizens, "police officers have the potential to create an environment that not only improves public safety but also enhances citizen engagement and involvement and builds a sense of community." It can be seen here how community policing aims not only to increase the flow of intelligence to the police but also, through interactive engagement with the community, to strengthen the ties that bind citizens together as well as those that bind them to the police.

Critical to this is achieving a sense of common interests, values and norms between police and community. Re-oriented patrols and a geographical focus can help to achieve this by opening up more points for the general public to access the police. Increased face-to-face contact with the community allows police to adjust to local norms and standards of ordered behaviour. As Skolnick and Bayley (1988:71) write, working more closely with the community allows them "to explain themselves, associate themselves with community initiatives, and become highly visible as concerned defenders of public safety." In this way, Eck and Rosenbaum (1994) believe, community policing also provides some means of redressing discrimination by including those communities, particularly minorities, who have traditionally been treated unfairly by police practice. By involving previously excluded groups, it is hoped that some of the distance between police and minority communities, such as that identified in the Scarman Report, will be closed. This can be difficult, however, in urban environments where communities are fragmented and show few signs of social cohesion, let alone an identifiable set of norms or standards of behaviour (Buerger 1994).

In addition to the strategic dimension, Cordner also identifies the tactical dimension which describes how strategies can be pursued so that they contribute to the overarching goals of a community policing programme. Positive interaction, partnerships, and problem-solving are considered central to giving substance to the promises of community policing. Positive interaction requires that constructive and peaceful interactions with citizens are encouraged and reinforced as a way of counteracting the inevitable negative interactions. In addition to reaffirming solidarity between officers and the community, a focus on establishing positive interactions makes policing more enjoyable and rewarding for both sides (Cordner 2005). Problem-solving contributes to this by making street-level policing less incident-focused and therefore more proactive. Where reform-era policing focused its attention on responding to calls for assistance, community policing encourages officers to analyse underlying social issues or trends that may be driving crime within a community. In this way, officers can have a more meaningful effect on crime and fear of crime in the area they patrol.

Partnership, sometimes described as interagency cooperation, is a common component of community policing emphasised by the literature. Dealing with crime in its broader social context requires that police work with other agencies also involved in improving the overall well-being of the community. It is based on the recognition that crime is a reflection of larger problems within society, dealing with which would be beyond any department's capabilities. Sadd and Grinc (1994:41) write that "no police department can do effective and efficient problem solving without the active involvement of other city agencies." In an example from New York, Kelling and Coles (1996:159-160) describe how solving the problem of disorder in the subway system required a number of different actors – from public relations departments to station managers – to contribute to solving an issue that transcended the traditionally defined boundaries of each of those actors. By working together, a more comprehensive strategy could be adopted.

Interagency cooperation thus requires police departments to consider themselves within a much larger operating environment. It is important that police are able to integrate themselves into this effort and work collaboratively with organisations that may have a very different working agenda. In some cases, this will require police to take a proactive role in encouraging such cooperation. Schneider (1998:352) writes that "the efficacy of a police department in advancing crime prevention is dependent upon their ability to promote collective action." While this may be outside their primary role and may consume extra police resources, the community model outlines how such effort can ultimately lead to more effective broad-based social control over the long-term.

Interagency cooperation can also involve groups already working at the community level. A common example is Neighbourhood Watch. Neighbourhood Watch schemes aim to foster a sense of community by asking neighbourhood residents to take greater responsibility for preventing disorder in their local area (Skolnick & Bayley 1988). They can involve basic measures such as an effort by neighbours to provide informal surveillance of the street to more advanced programmes of patrolling and reporting. For police, Neighbourhood Watch is designed to lighten the burden of patrolling and monitoring areas; however, like other aspects of community policing, wider benefits come from the strengthening of neighbourhood ties and the more productive police-community relationship that flow indirectly from such programmes (Fleming 2005).

The organisational dimension of community policing describes those aspects of a department's functioning that allow officers to conduct their work in a way that is consistent with the goals of community policing. Here, structure, management and information are considered vital to establishing an organisational culture conducive to the development of a symbiotic relationship

between police and the community. To suit the emphasis on a uniform police response, reform-era policing saw the development of bureaucratic department structures with clearly identifiable chains of command being a hallmark. Community policing aims to both decentralise and flatten the police hierarchical structure. Decentralisation is often utilised to shorten lines of communication across the agency and give officers the required autonomy to effectively respond to the community. The shift reflects wider changes occurring in the corporate world and a desire by police to emulate private sector models for improving efficiency and service delivery (Skogan & Hartnett 2005).

In policing terms, decentralisation means that responses to incidents are dictated less by a centralised decision-making process and more by the instincts and intuitions of the officer on the street. The aim is that smaller units with smaller areas of operation will be able to achieve higher levels of contact with their local community and thus deliver a higher quality service to that community (Bennett 1994:229). As Kelling and Coles (1996:160) write: "Because problems are most often local – requiring identification and crafting of responses at this level – authority must be devolved to lower levels of the police organization if a department is to be responsive to neighbourhood needs." Decentralisation can also be seen as a response to the issues relating to racial inequality and inequitable policing in urban neighbourhoods. In these cases it is hoped that giving officers greater flexibility will enable departments to respond more effectively to the concerns of minorities, whose voice may otherwise be lost in dense urban neighbourhoods.

Alongside decentralisation, more significant changes have been made at the strategy and planning levels to bring policing into line with a corporate style of department management (Kelling & Coles 1996). Under community policing, street-level officers are given greater responsibility for decision-making in their area in the hope that they will become more self-directing. Meanwhile, senior officers are expected to encourage initiative and develop strategies that enhance the role of their subordinates (Skolnick & Bayley 1988). Enabling street-level officers to contribute to department planning aims to make use of the wealth of information possessed by those who are closest to the problem (Wycoff & Skogan 1994). By integrating this information into department strategies, it is hoped that an improved service can be delivered to the public. This contribution will complement that provided by the community, and through this, ensure that police policy reflects the concerns of those who experience and deal with the problem.

A flatter hierarchical structure also aims to improve the job satisfaction, morale and performance of police officers (Lurigio & Rosenbaum 1994). Wycoff and Skogan (1994:89) explain: "Employees who are treated as internal customers, the logic goes, are better able to understand what it means to treat citizens as external customers." Community policing affects

an officer's skills, motivations and opportunities by asking them to form new partnerships with those they police and those they work with (Wilkinson & Rosenbaum 1994). This creates more opportunities for career development and up-skilling. In many cases, avenues for promotion are altered so as to encourage greater innovation and initiative among individual officers (Weisel & Eck 1994; Wycoff & Skogan 1994). Kelling and Coles (1996) describe how the role of the sergeant is transformed from being an overseer to being that of a mentor or coach (Kelling & Coles 1996).

A flatter command structure can also help towards gaining internal acceptance of the new policing model (Greene et al. 1994:106). Gaining officer input into such programmes is important but can be difficult. Guyot (1979) describes how police rank structures can be resistant to change, highlighting factors such as a lack of flexibility and insularity as significant barriers to organisational reform. Community policing intends to gain the support of officers across different ranks to make the transition more effective. It aims to improve job satisfaction by increasing the number of unemotional, non-emergency contacts officers have with the public, and in so doing, lessening the likelihood of combative or hostile attitudes developing (Skolnick & Bayley 1988). A more receptive attitude amongst rank-and-file officers has been identified as a key factor contributing to the success of the model because they are the ones who have to turn departmental policy into a reality on the street (Sadd & Grinc 1994).

Together these dimensions constitute a broad outline of the community policing model. While individual programmes may vary, in general these philosophies, structures, and strategies have come to define the implementation of community policing around the world. Following its emergence in the United States and Britain, the community policing turn can now be seen across Asia (Skolnick & Bayley 1988), Latin America (Frühling 2012; Neild 2000), Central Europe (International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights 2002), the Pacific (Butterworth 2005; Chan 1997) and, most recently, in cases of international policing (Emmott et al. 2010; Greener 2009a). It is this most recent development that is of primary concern here. However, to better understand the implications of this development it is necessary to look back at the lessons learned in domestic contexts and, through this, develop a greater awareness of the potential issues associated with the implementation of the community policing model in a post-conflict setting.

Engaging Communities in the “Foreign Policy Space”

With the expansion of community policing came a number of careful examinations and critiques. The following review brings together discussions surrounding the implementation of community policing in the United States, Britain, Latin America, and Canada. The studies that

have been reviewed raise a number of questions surrounding the appropriateness and effectiveness of community policing in dealing with issues of crime control. They identify and explore some of the social, cultural and political challenges that face police officers under this new model and, because of this, provide a useful insight for understanding the challenges faced by international police officers as they seek to engage communities in post-conflict societies. These issues are discussed, firstly, in relation to how they have arisen in domestic settings and, secondly, in relation to how they might manifest in the post-conflict environment. The questions that arise out of this review aim to explore some of the philosophical, strategic, tactical and organisational dimensions of the policing effort and understand more about the implications of such an approach for building a sustainable peace in Solomon Islands.

'Communities' in Conflict

A primary concern emerging in the literature on community policing is a lack of detail concerning what is actually meant by the term 'community'. Use of the term to promote a range of public and private initiatives has grown in popularity in recent times as the expansion of urban societies erodes traditional patterns of interaction and mobility (Bryson & Mowbray 1981). Reclaiming a lost sense of communal solidarity is seen as the answer to a range of social problems not necessarily limited to crime and disorder. As Skogan and Hartnett (1997:433) write, "[a]t a mythic level, community policing reminds us of a world we think we once had, but have now lost". Such rhetoric provides an idealised image of the vision underlying the model but reveals little about the particular kinds of community that it aims to encourage. Many observers now question whether such imagery provides a sufficient base for grass-roots collective action or whether it merely acts as a 'spray-on solution', lending legitimacy to deteriorating institutions through the promotion of "vague formulations and selective perceptions" (Bryson & Mowbray 1981:256). Buerger (1994:270, emphasis in original) writes:

Little attention has been given to definition of the community commensurate with the vast promise embedded in the community policing rhetoric. Even less has been spared for defining the role that can be reasonably expected of "the community," howsoever it should be defined.

While nostalgic images of 'community' may provide a vision for citizens to aspire to, they can have a powerful political effect by asserting an overly simplistic image of diverse, multi-faceted social groupings. Such assertions tend to underplay the significance of social conflict and disagreement, instead aiming to superimpose an image of unity and structure over often very fluid communal arrangements. As Cunneen (1992:161) writes: "Under the rubric of community, contradictory social relations such as those of class, race and gender disappear. Relations

between groups of people which may involve the exercise of power and exploitation are deemed non-existent if the definition imposed posits a single community". The practice can also act as a way of undermining dissent and ensuring minority groups conform to the wishes of the community's majority (Cunneen 1992). By presenting an a-political construction of social relations, emphasising essentialised conceptions of unity, and promoting a static vision of highly mobile societies, the term can promote programme goals that are both unrealisable and unfair.

'Communities' exist in a variety of forms, and it is this variety that can make communities particularly difficult to conceptualise and engage. Whether community policing programmes refer to geographically-defined communities, as in neighbourhoods or streets, or ones centred around a particular "imagined" link of ethnicity, culture, or nationality, their multiplicity and diversity do not appear to be given sufficient consideration by the model. The issue is not merely definitional. When complex social processes of community formation are obscured, multi-dimensional identity-formation processes can be overlooked and the potential for harmful expressions of communal solidarity ignored.

Observers both inside and outside the community policing literature argue that strong communities are not always inclusive, egalitarian or stable and can often become overprotective or violent towards outsiders (Skolnick & Bayley 1988). Community policing, like other 'community-oriented' programmes, tends to assume that communities are defined by homogeneity, good-natured neighbourhood relations and the absence of tension or conflict (Ellison 2007). Several examples highlighted by the literature on community policing demonstrate the potential for unintended consequences to result from the narrow focus on communal solidarity as a mechanism for crime control. Correia (2000) describes how communities defined along geographical boundaries can have a tendency to become exclusive, as witnessed by the growth in gated communities across many US cities. Such communities often have invasive surveillance systems and conditions of membership that would otherwise be considered illegal if imposed by a government. Communities such as these can also exhibit a lack of interest in the stability and overall health of the community outside of their own (Correia 2000). This concern that communities can become insular and develop solidarity at the expense of those around them is a common thread across studies of community and community-building.

Theorists of social capital, Nat Colletta and Michelle Cullen (2000:6), write that "social capital can be constructive and support societal cohesion and the mitigation of conflict, but it can also be perverted to hasten social fragmentation and the onslaught of violent conflict". They stress that violence is not necessarily driven by the lack of community strength, but is often the result of harmful social arrangements that see tight-knit communities mobilise against one another

(Goodhand et al. 2000; John 2011; Nan 2008; Vervisch 2011). For example, Colletta and Cullen write that during the Rwandan genocide, various forms of social capital were evident. In some cases, social networks became strong and exclusionary as ethnic boundaries solidified, whereas in others, they became more dense and more tightly bound within families and groups targeted by the *Interhamwe* and other militias (Colletta & Cullen 2000:18). Often peaceful communities are based upon a range of social links, the varying strength and density of which helps to mitigate or mediate conflict. In describing the value of weak social ties, Granovetter (1973) writes that it is often the ties between communities, rather than within them, that are the most important for building a more cohesive social network.

The observations here regarding the nature of 'community' lead to questions over whether an emphasis on community-building in a post-conflict society may lead to the same kinds of exclusive, insular or even violent communities described by theorists of social capital and community-building. The lesson provided by both of these literatures appears to be that not all community-level processes contribute to more peaceful communities. Community policing must therefore involve more than simply strengthening communities and go further towards considering what kinds of social formulations produce peaceful results for local neighbourhoods. As Glaser and Denhardt (2010:311) write: "If community policing is to play a role in both public safety and community building, then officers must be vigilant and resourceful in tying the agendas of neighbourhood to the overarching agenda of community". Preventing the harmful by-products of community-building requires that not only are links within neighbourhoods strengthened but that they are connected to an overarching sense of "community". In post-conflict settings, the need for such considerations is heightened given the extent of social fragmentation and the multidimensional path to reconciliation.

Murphy (2007) argues that the idealised assumptions about the value of community strength contained within the community policing model are often ill-fitted to post-conflict societies characterised by deep socio-economic, ideological, ethnic, tribal or class cleavages. In such settings, strong communities can turn against one another and in some cases hinder the development of an overarching social network capable of negating conflict.

A particular concern is the re-emergence or re-entrenching of such constructions if community-building simply reinforces local attachments and existing societal boundaries. While local identities can be diverse, multi-faceted and inclusive, there remains the possibility for narrowly-defined communities to become exclusive and, in some cases, harmful to broader efforts aimed at bringing about reconciliation and unity. The potential for communities, either physical or imagined, to be mobilised for violent purposes is also a very real concern. On this basis, Murphy (2007:250) argues that implementing a policing model that encourages and rewards

'community' involvement may be "perhaps premature and potentially dangerous". How such concerns factor into the considerations of international police officers at the street level is an important question.

The above discussion has illustrated the lack of clarity concerning what constitutes a community and has highlighted how this lack of clarity can hinder the effectiveness of a police force that aims to be community-driven. Knowing more about this is particularly important given the community-ethos underlying much of RAMSI and the PPF's work. Given the lack of a clear model for community engagement, the perspectives of individual officers will have a defining impact upon how the model operates at the street level. It is necessary therefore to examine in greater detail the kinds of community activities and behaviour that are being encouraged or discouraged by police officers in post-conflict societies and to what extent concerns around different community-level processes are factored into the community-oriented approach. Part of this involves understanding how international police officers conceive of "local communities", including what social, cultural or political hallmarks define a "community" in the host society and what kinds of communities those hallmarks create. Also of importance to a study of community policing is how the different aspects or traits of that landscape were utilised by international police officers to engage local communities. Because of the positioning of international police officers at the forefront of the mission's outreach efforts, their perception of the local "community" landscape will have a defining impact on how "community" policing operates in that context. Likewise, their understanding of how those communities were affected by conflict will also be of critical importance to the scope and direction of the wider peace-building effort.

The first research question aims to explore these issues and asks:

How do international police officers adapt to the local social, political and cultural context and how does their understanding of that context shape the approach they take towards engaging local communities?

Outreach and Inequality

Alongside the definitional issues surrounding how communities are conceived and constructed, are issues associated with how programmes are carried out and the potential for certain groups to be marginalised. Like 'community', the term 'community outreach' can be misleading. The term is often used alongside others, such as 'collaboration', 'co-production' and 'partnership', to describe the kinds of relationships that police organisations hope to build with their local community. While such terms may be helpful in many cases, they can often be too vague to provide any indication as to what a programme actually entails or how it operates for residents

at the street level (Goris & Walters 1999). In the case of 'outreach', this lack of detail can have a significant social effect as it carries the potential to obscure unequal or inequitable results and further isolate those parts of the community that are most in need of police help.

Fielding argues that community-based policing systems tend to only work effectively in communities with an established level of social capital and community cohesion. In the case of neighbourhood watch, Fielding (2005:462) writes that "[m]embership correlates with income more than risk". Likewise, in their study, Sadd and Grinc found that knowledge of a programme and how it functioned often depended to a large extent on one's position in the community with those considered leaders knowing a significant amount more than 'ordinary' community members (Sadd & Grinc 1994). It appears to be often the case that "those who talk of 'the community' are those who by virtue of their social and economic power have the resources to enforce particular notions of moral and social behaviour. It is in their interest to define themselves as 'community' or its representatives" (Cunneen 1992:162).

It is important to recognise therefore that efforts aimed at gaining community input have the potential to only engage certain elements of that community and, in doing so, perpetuate inequality and undermine a programme's effectiveness (Frühling 2012; Schneider 1998). In a review of community policing in Vancouver, Schneider (1998) expresses doubt over the ability of community policing to engage and empower socially-disadvantaged neighbourhoods. A scientific approach to crime control has, in Schneider's (1998:359) view, hindered the ability of Vancouver's police department to genuinely engage with the city's poorer neighbourhoods, instead preferring to rely on "technical solutions to social problems". Skolnick and Bayley (1988) describe cases, such as in remote areas of Australia, where policing is characterised by a reliance on certain individuals or elements of the local community to assist the police in their role. Such a relationship may be effective but says little about how minorities or outsiders might be treated by the police if they come into conflict with those favoured actors in the local community. These examples demonstrate that a citizen's community policing experience is often affected by their wealth or social status. The potential for these kinds of community outreach to result in exclusion, inequality or unfair treatment by the police is therefore a key area of concern.

In post-conflict societies there may be a variety of reasons why citizens are either unable or unwilling to engage the police on matters affecting their community. It could be the case that the potential for inequality is exacerbated in such a context where achieving a genuine partnership across different communities is complicated by both practical and political obstacles. Often unequal treatment by police can result from poor communication or a lack of a clear approach regarding the actual process of community engagement. Mobekk's (2002) study of community

policing following conflict in East Timor identified how the lack of a clear approach to community engagement weakened the prospects for substantive community input into the policing programme. In this case, Mobekk (2002:66) writes that “No UN document that referred to the use of community policing in East Timor defined the concept or explained it in depth.” As a result, it was never clear what the pilot community policing programme in East Timor aimed to achieve or how its functioning might affect its wider implementation (Emmott et al. 2010).

For residents in post-conflict societies, a lack of clarity from the police about the new programme can make involvement more difficult or more costly. It can also allow policing agencies to perpetuate their dominance of decision-making and fail to follow through on the more substantive changes required for effective community input (Frühling 2012; Goris & Walters 1999; Schneider 1998).

To answer these questions requires some understanding of what efforts were made by international police officers to communicate and genuinely engage with the local population so that an equitable police service was provided to all. The literature has demonstrated that effective community engagement requires both clarity and commitment from police officers; clarity that informs the community about the role they can play and commitment that goes beyond the technical aspects of policing and toward a more genuine working partnership with citizens. Asking these questions will reveal more about the how the issues identified by Schneider and Fielding, regarding unequal access to police, are being managed in post-conflict Solomon Islands where neighbourhoods may be fragmented or isolated. Given the country’s history, examining the extent to which local communities are able to access the police on equal and equitable terms is important when assessing the value of international police forces in bringing about a durable and sustainable peace.

The second research question aims to explore these issues by asking:

What strategies do international police employ to interact and engage with the local population and how do these strategies aim to contribute to an effective and equitable partnership between officers and citizens?

Trust

A related issue is trust and how to establish or re-establish trust between police officers and the local community. It is an issue common to the implementation of community policing around the world and, as contributors to the community policing literature highlight, is one that many police organisations struggle with. Overcoming the distrust sown by previous policing practices or behaviour can be a significant challenge in gaining community input and achieving effective

community consultation. Schneider (1998) has described the difficulties that police in Vancouver faced in overcoming the negative perception that mental health patients had of police due to their association with highly stressful situations. In describing the findings of his research, Schneider (1998:357) writes:

Because of their repeated exposure to police responses to crisis situations, the mentally ill associate police primarily with these highly stressful and adversarial encounters. These situations reinforce a negative image of police by the mentally ill and many focus group members expressed an intimidation of an uniformed officer. As one focus group participant succinctly stated, "sick people get very disturbed when they see a uniform."

Such observations highlight the extent of the deficit in trust that some law enforcement agencies face and illustrate how images, symbols or icons associated with police forces can evoke a very real sense of fear within parts of the community. In their analysis of eight community policing projects implemented across the United States, Sudd and Grinc (1994) found that departments tended to ignore or understate the depth of mistrust and hostility that characterised relations between the police and both poor and minority communities.

The issue of trust is closely related to that of power. Fielding (2005) describes how a police force must constantly balance its role as a coercive force imposing social order with that of service provider to the public. Community policing aims to limit a police force's reliance on coercion; however, it is argued that, in doing so, it may merely obscure the influence the police have in exercising social control (Skolnick & Bayley 1988). Some observers highlight how the emphasis on proximity and close contact has the potential to legitimate the intrusion of the state into local communities and, through this, become a mechanism for tighter government surveillance (Skolnick & Bayley 1988). Neild (2000) argues that, rather than promoting responsiveness, closer proximity can often mean tighter control and lend greater authority to the actions of the police.

Community policing may also contribute to an erosion of trust by undermining the depoliticised and impartial nature of policing. When the police form stronger bonds with the community, they are drawn more strongly into taking sides and favouring particular conceptions of social order (Fielding 2005). Cunneen argues that collaboration across different agencies can often result in informal alliances between law enforcement and local politicians, in a way similar to that which occurred during the political era of policing. "Such informal mechanisms of control..." Cunneen (1992:164) argues, "may operate with open disregard to the formal separation of powers".

Trust and the appropriate exercise of police power are important issues for international police officers to consider when interacting with communities emerging from conflict. Several

observers of international policing express concern that community policing may not be the most appropriate approach given its reliance on high levels of trust between police and the community. As Murphy (2007:249) writes:

While mistrust of police power is understandable, given the record of most pre-reform police forces, Western reform experience suggests there are good reasons to question the effectiveness of pursuing a reform strategy that emphasises aggressive, externally imposed mechanisms of public sanctioning and police governance.

Experience with the community policing model in jurisdictions with a history of coercive policing has delivered mixed results regarding trust. Neild (2000) identifies a number of obstacles that have made the implementation of community policing in Latin America particularly difficult. High levels of distrust of the police, significant power imbalances between different communities and weak control mechanisms undermined the ability of police departments to develop a productive relationship with their community. Frühling (2012) agrees that the history of police repression in Latin America made the implementation of community policing considerably more difficult. Similar issues have emerged in post-conflict settings. Mobekk (2002), in evaluating the implementation of community policing in East Timor, describes how a close relationship between security forces and the public could in fact serve as a reminder of the brutal forms of policing experienced under Indonesian rule. Many believe the issue of trust is accentuated for international police who are typically deployed for short periods of time and have a limited understanding of the history of the host society.

A number of observers of international policing have expressed concern that a mandate for decentralisation and the devolution of authority in fragile and unstable societies may undermine the ability of officials to monitor the exercise of police power. Murphy (2007:252) argues that allowing for a reduced role for centralised management and greater police discretion would first require “a relatively benign political and community environment but also police officers that are inclined and able to resist the powerful corrupting forces in their working environment”. Post-conflict societies are rarely defined by such high standards of official conduct. Issues associated with accountability are not limited to local police forces. In cases where foreign police forces are given executive authority to police a local society, imposing a model of policing not designed locally and working alongside military actors, lines of authority become blurred and the issue of legitimacy becomes more complex and confused (Sheptycki 2007).

For these reasons, some observers have expressed scepticism over the ability of international police officers to overcome entrenched distrust, and concern that efforts to improve police-community relations may in fact antagonise the local population (Mobekk 2002).

Others, however, have pointed out that due to their separation from the local political sphere, international officers may be better placed to act as neutral agents than local police. In describing the role played by colonial-era *kiaps* in Papua New Guinea, Dinnen and Braithwaite (2009:169) write:

Kiaps, magistrates and other expatriate officials exercised considerable autonomy in their dealings with local leaders precisely because they were foreigners. Their apparent lack of interest in competing with Melanesians by engaging in local politics and their immunity to the pressures of wantokism contributed to an aura of independence and impartiality.

Knowing more about how issues of trust affect the operation of international police forces helps to build an understanding of how effective partnerships can be built out of cultural difference and entrenched negative perceptions of police. Levels of trust in police are likely to vary between different communities and further between individuals. The aim here is not to measure overall levels of trust in the same way to that done by RAMSI's People's Survey. Instead, the research question asks:

What efforts were made by the international police to overcome, alter or reinforce existing perceptions of the police and how were these efforts adapted to, and affected by, local context?

Organisational Change

A further concern raised in the literature on community policing is the ability of police organisations to undergo the required changes in procedures and, more importantly, priorities that would make community policing a viable model. Involving the community in the traditionally tough business of maintaining social order is a difficult step for police organisations accustomed to centralised decision-making and authority. As described above, successful community policing requires that police organisations undergo a significant degree of change in structure and operation in order to engage effectively with the general public. While the model highlights how decentralised organisational systems and less hierarchical command structures can allow this to happen, a number of studies have illustrated the difficulties in bringing about such changes.

In their study of six policing agencies in the United States, Weisel and Eck (1994) found that departments were reluctant to put into effect the required changes, and in cases where they did attempt to improve mechanisms for community engagement, were selective in their implementation. Sadd and Grinc (1994) found that in many of the agencies they examined, community policing had been imposed in a top-down fashion. A lack of communication about the goals of the projects was also a problem with the result that many street-level officers resisted the changes due to a lack of knowledge as to their benefit.

Entrenched department cultures can also pose a barrier. Skogan (1994) describes how many programmes have struggled due to a reliance on traditional crime-fighting methods. Mid-level managers have felt reluctant to push through the changes because such programmes can divert resources away from responding to emergency calls. As a result, community policing was slow to develop the broad-based support required in many of the police departments that implemented it (Skogan 1994).

These observations serve to direct attention towards the organisational dynamics within international policing contingents and the importance of developing a consistent policing response across all contributing agencies. While the community policing model discusses philosophical, strategic, tactical and organisational change, the situation is slightly different in post-conflict settings. Most often, the role of international police officers after stabilising the security situation is to implement and then establish a community policing model they will most likely have some familiarity with. The task is complicated, however, when different national policing contingents come together with different approaches and understandings of the community-oriented approach.

As was highlighted earlier, there exists no single, well-defined model of community policing. Instead, programmes have been developed in an ad-hoc fashion across a wide variety of cases. Formulating and implementing a coherent community-oriented approach across police organisations with different attitudes and operational strategies can therefore be difficult. Organisational change, in this context, then refers, not only to the ability of international police forces to bridge the gap with the local community, but to overcome those logistical and cultural barriers that may hinder the effectiveness of the policing mission as a whole to deliver a responsive and equitable service to the host society.

Increasing demand for international police and growing complexity of recent intra-state conflicts has meant that missions of this kind have often had to draw upon a wider range of policing organisations, thus accentuating the level of difficulty (Goldsmith & Harris 2009). Problems of 'horizontal interoperability' (Rubinstein et al. 2008) plague many missions of this kind, and various studies highlight the difficulties of generating a consistent response across

police, military, and civilian components (Goldsmith & Harris 2009; Greener 2009a; McLeod 2009; Rubinstein et al. 2008). For international police forces, disparities between different national policing agendas can make the creation of a coherent peace-building strategy difficult. Goldsmith and Harris (2009) analyse the challenge within the context of the UNPOL mission to Timor-Leste. Their study stressed the importance of coherence, competency and co-operation across the various contributing police agencies but found that communication barriers, differences in operating style and poor coordination hindered effective collaboration between them. These conclusions illustrate the difficulties associated with developing a consistent approach to both policing and peace-building and lead to questions about how these difficulties might affect the work of individual officers at the village- or street-level.

Further issues can arise when the relationship with local police is considered. In many cases, the mandate of international police forces is to build and establish this model within the local community and within the local police force. These capacity development roles are, in themselves, becoming increasingly complex, especially when the task involves re-building an effective democratic police force within an unstable and uncertain peace process (Bayley 2001; den Heyer 2010; Goldsmith & Dinnen 2007; Hughes & Hunt 2010; McLeod 2009; Peake 2010). Here again, disparities between the operational styles and organisational cultures of international and local police forces can create issues not only for implementing a community-oriented policing approach, but also for establishing and embedding it over time. Both the capability and professionalism of the local police force can create challenges for international police asked to work alongside them. Poor human rights records, low morale, lack of resources and inadequate training are common problems plaguing police forces of post-conflict societies, yet the difficulties these issues pose must be negotiated on a daily basis by international police officers for mandates to be fulfilled. The difficulties require individual officers to not only be effective mentors and trainers but also to be capable of exercising patience and sensitivity towards the officers they operate alongside. Bayley (2001:28), in his guide to building democratic policing, writes: “

Reformers both inside and outside police organizations should be careful not to denigrate the motivation, knowledge, or skill of the people whose behavior they are trying to change. Denigration can occur unintentionally if proponents of change imply that the people whose behavior they want to change are personally at fault.... Sensitivity in advocacy is the solution to this problem....

While the extensive literatures on police capacity-development and security sector reform provide a number of insights into how to approach these organisational or bureaucratic aspects

to these challenges, the community policing literature reviewed here serves to highlight the philosophical dimension and the importance of a coherent approach to community engagement across both local and international actors. Organisational structures and strategies will contribute to this at the planning level. However, establishing the coherence, competency and co-operation that Goldsmith and Harris discuss will ultimately depend on the attitudes and approaches of individual police officers so as to establish, manage and sustain a positive working environment for all actors. To learn more about the challenges that integrated missions pose at the departmental level, the fourth research question will ask:

How do international police officers manage their relationships with other contributing agencies (including other national policing contingents, local police and military support) so as to ensure a consistent and co-ordinated policing service is provided to the host community?

Conclusion

The intention here has been to review the literature on modern policing in order to develop a series of questions for examining recent moves to incorporate policing elements into post-conflict peace-building missions. A brief history of policing was used to draw attention to the dominant themes that have arisen in the profession over recent decades and to highlight the core philosophical and operational components of the community-oriented approach. The turn towards greater community input into policing emerged out of a crisis of legitimacy for many police departments around the world. Police ambivalence to the rising racial tension and inequality in many urban neighbourhoods contributed to this crisis and created a need for police to devise a strategy that could overcome entrenched distrust of their organisation as well as the vast cultural gap between them and the community they policed. In police departments around the world, various efforts were made to open up policing to the public and thereby create a more responsive and democratic policing approach. It has been described how community policing emerged as a model aimed at overcoming cultural difference and racial inequality in urban neighbourhoods and how its emergence raised new questions surrounding its appropriateness and effectiveness as a model for policing these communities. The review of the community policing literature identified points of cooperation, collaboration, tension and strain that can arise at the interface between police forces and local communities and, for this reason, provides a useful lens for learning more about the local-level dynamics of post-conflict international policing.

The review has produced four core research questions for the application of community policing to a post-conflict peace-building mission. The first asks how the term 'community' is

defined and applied by international police forces. The question is based on an acknowledgement that not all communities are peaceful and that violent conflict can often arise out of community-level processes that promote exclusion or separation at the expense of a more cohesive social structure. Asking questions as to what kinds of community behaviour are encouraged or discouraged by international police will reveal more about how such concerns are being addressed.

The second question addresses issues around how the police go about engaging with the community and how that engagement might impact unequally across different communities. It asks what efforts are made to ensure that the international policing mission communicates effectively with local populations. Effective communication is central to ensuring equal access to policing across neighbourhoods and encouraging genuine and democratic input from the local community on issues concerning social order.

The third question asks in what ways and to what extent trust was established between international police and local neighbourhoods. Entrenched distrust is an issue faced by many police departments and one that international police officers will most likely come into contact with in post-conflict societies.

The final question considers issues of organisational culture within the international police force and asks bureaucratic obstacles may impede the ability of international police officers to engage the local community.

Research Scope and Methodology

The previous chapter established four core research questions that aim to provide some insight into the dynamics of the relationship between members of the RAMSI Participating Police Force and local Solomon Islands communities. The questions raise a number of concerns that may arise given the unique social, cultural and political context of post-conflict Solomon Islands and seek to shed light on to what extent these concerns were mitigated or addressed by members of the international police contingent. Before attempting to answer these questions, it is necessary to briefly outline the research methods used and their limitations so that the proper scope of the study is recognised.

As the research questions set out, the focus of this research is on certain aspects of the relationship between the PPF and local communities. It is, therefore, not an attempt to review or evaluate the effectiveness of the policing mission as a whole. The intention here is to explore some of unique ethical, political and practical issues faced by officers of the PPF and understand, from their perspective, how they aimed to address or deal with them as they arose.

There are numerous ways of conducting research so as to gain an insight into participants' perspectives. The relatively small size of the New Zealand Police contingent meant that a quantitative study, traditionally based on large data-sets, would be difficult to carry out and limited in utility. Instead, a qualitative approach, based heavily around semi-structured interviews with PPF officers, has been selected as a way of gaining an insight into their experiences during their deployment to Solomon Islands.

Interviews of this kind provide a window into the work of officers at the street-level and allow them to discuss and evaluate their own experience as well as provide detail regarding the wider context in which they operated. Goldsmith and Harris (Goldsmith 2009; Goldsmith & Harris 2009) have conducted similar studies of post-conflict policing missions and have used the interview method for gaining an insight into the work of individual officers deployed under such missions. They write:

The interview method was adopted in recognition of the wealth of knowledge held in the minds of individual officers but not necessarily collected or utilised in a formal, coherent manner. (Goldsmith & Harris 2009:191).

It is this knowledge that this research aims to gain access to so that more can be understood about the process of interaction and cooperation that occur between PPF officers and the local community.

The semi-structured interview method has two particular benefits that are of relevance here: firstly, it gives participants a greater opportunity to be involved in the relaying of their stories and secondly, it affords some flexibility to the interviewer in responding to those stories. Unlike survey methods, where participants are provided with set range of responses, semi-structured interviews allow the participant to explain in their own words their experience as well as other details they feel relevant to fully understanding that experience. This is hugely beneficial for a study that aims to go beyond simplistic portrayals of very complex situations and explore the unique experiences that arise out of the participant's position. A further benefit of this particular method is the ability to reflect on the participant's responses and adapt the interview's focus accordingly. As Robson writes: "Face-to-face interviews offer the possibility of modifying one's line of enquiry, following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives in a way that postal and other self-administered questionnaires cannot" (Robson 2011:280). This flexibility will allow for questions to be tailored to address the particular roles and responsibilities of each participant and, in this way, avoid problems posed by irrelevant or ill-suited questions. By permitting the interviewer to follow up on interesting or important issues, the method also encourages a greater degree of depth as it allows the emphasis to shift with the participant's response (Bryman 2012:470). Flexibility can also allow the interview's focus to be shaped more by the empirical data rather than any preconceived biases or ill-founded assumptions.

Because the research questions focus on the community-level dynamics of post-conflict policing, an emphasis has been placed on interviews with PPF officers who served at the street-level during their deployment or deployments in Solomon Islands. It is the stories of these officers that provide the most direct insight into the intricacies of everyday interactions between international police officers and local community members. A total of 15 interviews were conducted with New Zealand Police officers from across the contingent. Of the 14, three were female and one was a non-sworn member of Police staff. The 14 served at different stages of the mission and in different locations across Solomon Islands. While they were deployed in a range of roles, most had a frontline component that saw them interacting with local communities on a day-to-day basis.

In addition to this, interviews were also conducted with New Zealand Police Commissioner and former Solomon Islands Police Commissioner, Peter Marshall, and Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time of RAMSI's deployment, Hon. Mr. Phil Goff. These interviews are less about gaining an

insight into personal experience and more about understanding the overarching context in which the work of the PPF took place. Their observations helped to illustrate the extent to which the concerns raised were acknowledged and discussed at the planning level. They also highlight some of the links between the local community and international actors.

Social science research of this kind inevitably raises ethical concerns, particularly when it involves persons, such as police officers, who may have participated in, or been present for, highly emotional, stressful, or ethically complex situations. Interviewing individual officers raises further concerns by placing them in a difficult position vis-à-vis their superiors and co-workers. For these reasons, certain provisions were put in place to ensure that the interviews were carried out with the appropriate degree of sensitivity and so that officers felt enabled to speak freely and openly about their experiences. Schostak (2006:53-54) outlines six ethical protocols that should be followed when conducting interviews. These are: anonymisation, confidentiality, negotiation of access, right to say no, independence, and representation. Anonymisation and confidentiality deal with issues surrounding the identification of participants and how to appropriately handle information that may compromise the privacy or security of the participant. Here, participants have been given a number of options, ranging from open identification to complete anonymity, to allow them to select a level of confidentiality they believe is appropriate for their situation.¹⁴ This is to ensure that participants are comfortable with discussing their experiences and that they have an assurance that the information provided will not be misused. They are also given the right to cancel the interview or retract any or all information they provide. Information sheets and consent forms ensure that participants are fully informed and have the ability to raise any concerns prior to the interview taking place. Representation and negotiation of access are more easily managed as interviews will be arranged in close consultation with a liaison officer within the New Zealand Police Force. The final criterion, independence, is more difficult to achieve as the involvement of the New Zealand Police requires that the New Zealand Police Research and Evaluation Steering Committee review and approve a draft of the research prior to publication. This means that complete independence is not achieved. Whether this affects the academic integrity of the research is an open question.¹⁵

¹⁴ All of the officers interviewed gave consent to be identified in this thesis. However, a decision was later made by the author to not identify any of the participants by name. It was felt that identifying an elevated level of risk, even with their consent, and added little in the way of value to the thesis. Locations and other relevant detail are provided as and when appropriate.

¹⁵ To ensure that the ethical concerns raised will be appropriately addressed, this research, including the information sheets and consent forms, has been reviewed and approved by both the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee as well as the New Zealand Police Research and Evaluation Steering Committee.

While the majority of research material will come from these interviews, official documents produced by the New Zealand and Australian governments, RAMSI, the Australian Federal Police and the New Zealand Police will also be utilised where necessary. This would likely be in cases where issues discussed in interviews relate to or have some bearing on government or official policies and practices. Newspaper articles will be utilised in a similar way. This is to add some depth to cases where an individual officer may not be able to recount or never knew the wider details relating to the event or process they describe. Useful information can also be gained from those stories that have relied upon interviews, similar to those that have been conducted here. This part of the research will include both local newspapers, for example, the Solomon Times and the Solomon Star News, as well as international sources, such as the New Zealand Herald, the Fiji Times, and the Sydney Morning Herald. Because of the difficulty in accounting for the editorial biases and other discrepancies across these sources, the intention here is to limit the extent to which they are relied upon. Instead the aim is to use these media sources primarily for background information so as to provide supporting detail to individual experiences where those details would otherwise be missed. Using these sources in such a way will allow for a degree of caution to be exercised as ensuring that they are appropriately contextualised.

The research questions and methodology outlined above have some significant limitations and it is important that these are recognised in order to make clear both the focus and scope of the research. The primary limitation of the research is that it focuses solely on the PPF meaning that the experience of local Solomon Islands communities in responding to the PPF's efforts will not be captured. There are both practical and academic reasons for this. In practical terms, conducting the kind of primary research in Solomon Islands villages necessary to gain an insight into their relationship with the PPF would have required a high financial commitment and incurred a significant personal cost for what could have been very little benefit. A lack of first-hand knowledge about Solomon Islands, as well as the fragile security situation there, increased the costs of this kind of research further. In academic terms, however, the omission of this kind of primary material was justified by the direction of the research questions. In the process of reviewing the literature and evaluating the various foci of the existing studies in this field, it became apparent that the experience of individual international police officers operating in remote communities had been left, to a large extent, unexamined. While there are a number of very helpful analyses of international policing, those that include an attempt to understand the micro-level processes involved in missions of this kind demonstrated a much greater awareness of the complexity and intricacy of the everyday experience of international police officers. This study intends to contribute in a similar way by allowing members of the PPF to explain their

experience under RAMSI and, in doing so, reveal more about how the larger questions surrounding police-led peace-building emerge at the community-level. Thus, there is some significant value in focusing the research in this way. However, it must be acknowledged that, in doing so, an important variable in the overall policing experience, that is, the ways in which efforts are received by the community, will not be fully surveyed.

A further limitation is the sole focus on New Zealand Police officers within the PPF. Again, this is due to the logistical barriers associated with gaining access to all contributing police organisations. As discussed earlier, the Australian Federal Police were the lead agency and, as such, constituted, by a significant margin, the majority of the PPF. At any one time, the New Zealand Police contingent consisted of roughly 35 officers in a mission of 350. A more complete and well-resourced study would likely look to involve the AFP, as well as other international contingents, due to the extent of their deployment. This limitation again required that the scope of the research be relatively narrow and not attempt to engage in any kind of comprehensive review of the policing mission as a whole. While the practical limitations were the primary reason for this, there are some benefits that come out of it. While numerically the New Zealand Police contribution is small, their role puts them in both an important and interesting position in that it requires them to work in a way that is compatible with both the local community and the much larger Australian contingent. The New Zealand Police website describes their role as such:

New Zealand police were deployed under RAMSI to act as part of an international police force to help in the conviction and arrest of several corrupt police members in top levels of police management. Since then, they have worked in an operational policing capacity alongside the RSIP

This role makes the New Zealand Police contingent a useful case to study both the horizontal and vertical dimensions of post-conflict community policing. As one part of a much larger operation, their relations with other national policing contingents, that is; the degree of horizontal interoperability, are important for building a coherent and consistent approach across the RAMSI mission. This introduces a way of examining the relationship between different policing contingents associated with the mission and understanding more about how these aspects of post-conflict policing affect a police peace-keeper's task. In addition, their role as street-level peacekeepers in Solomon Islands presents an opportunity to study their relations with the community, particularly the unique challenges associated with the transition from internal (New Zealand) to external (Solomon Islands) and the ways in which this affects their task as peace-builders.

The Experiences of International Police Peace-builders

‘Communities’ in Conflict

The first research question attempts to explore how individual police officers adapted to the local operating environment in Solomon Islands and how their understanding of that environment shaped the nature of their work building communities in Solomon Islands. It asks:

How do international police officers adapt to the local social, political and cultural context and how does their understanding of that context shape the approach they take towards engaging local communities?

The question aims to learn more about the challenges that RAMSI officers face as they adapted to the complexity and intricacy of Solomon Islands communities. It stems from observations in the literature regarding the sometimes unclear focus of community policing and the need for community police officers to understand the complexities of community-building so as to encourage the development of a more cohesive social network. Learning more about how New Zealand police officers adapted to the cultures and communities they encountered in Solomon Islands will provide an insight into the local level patterns of peace-building and the challenges of having international police officers lead that process. The interviews with New Zealand Police officers about their experiences reveal a number of interesting observations about the socio-political and cultural Solomon Islands context that both helped and hindered their ability to operate effectively as community police officers in that environment.

The first part of the question asks how officers adapted to the local social, political and cultural context in Solomon Islands. Understanding the perspective of officers on the ground is important as it is this perspective, rather than that of the academic literature or policy-makers, that will have the most significant effect on how the policing programme is carried out. The second part of the question therefore asks how officers' perspectives shaped their work as police officers in those communities. Given the recent history of factional conflict and communal violence in Solomon Islands, it is important to understand the ways in which the work of New Zealand Police officers encouraged, or perhaps hindered, peace-building at the community level.

On being deployed to Solomon Islands, officers encountered a diverse array of cultures and communities; all of whom have their own experience of the conflict and their own pathway to peace. Adapting to this context, and operating effectively within it, was a challenge faced by all of the officers interviewed and one that was almost entirely new to them.

Considering their role as peace-builders, it is appropriate to begin by exploring their experiences with, and observations of, the conflict that saw them deployed to Solomon Islands. Chapter two discussed some of the hallmarks of the conflict and gave a brief outline that showed 'ethnic' violence between the IFM and MEF gradually giving way to a more general sense of lawlessness and instability. This depiction comes from a review of the literature on the Tensions but says little about the experience of New Zealand Police officers serving on the ground. Knowing more about how they perceived their operating environment is useful for a more developing a more complete picture of how 'communities' are conceived within post-conflict policing missions.

Former New Zealand Police Commissioner and former Commissioner of the Royal Solomon Islands Police, Peter Marshall, highlighted the sometimes unstable nature of the political environment in Solomon Islands. In discussing this instability, the Commissioner (r) cited the findings of the Commission of Inquiry produced in the wake of the April 2006 riots:

[T]he Commission of Inquiry made the point very clearly that anything that involves political issues, whether they be by-elections, national general elections or whatever, causes great "excitement" – that was the word that was used. So we had to be very, very sensitive to the nuances of the politics of the Solomon Islands... They were very, very disparate, very parochial in terms of their provinces, but more importantly, parochial in terms of their tribal affiliations and their villages. And there was always that testiness: the rawness from the Tension period, 1999-2003 between Malaita and Guadalcanal. Issues that we had to deal with in terms of the land tenure and squatters and all that went with it: these were new challenges for New Zealand Police to have to walk that fine line.

There was therefore a need for New Zealand Police to be aware of the potential to upset this delicate balance. In their responses it seems there was an awareness among officers that any peace that had been established, even several years after RAMSI's arrival, was still fragile and that minor issues had the potential to cause significant agitation and disruption for the peace-building process. Looking more closely, however, reveals some interesting findings in regards to the influence that the 'Tensions' and national political events had on the experience of New Zealand Police officers.

Some of the officers interviewed were deployed at RAMSI's outset while others were only sent more recently, in some cases nearly 10 years since the mission was first established. Because of this difference, it might be expected that officers deployed in the initial stages encountered more of the ethnic tension and lawlessness of the Tension period than later contingents. This was certainly the case for some of the officers who noted that their tasks in the early stages

focused mainly around peace-keeping and spoke little of the peace-building or capacity development work that RAMSI transitioned to in later stages. One officer, stationed on the Weather Coast in 2003 described how, in line with RAMSI's mandate at that time, the focus of much of his work was on re-establishing security. He described this approach: "RAMSI sent the message out that they were there and they weren't going to be mucked around. It was: 'we're not going to take any nonsense'."

The focus in these early stages reflects the established pattern, whereby physical security is prioritised over other objectives in the early stages of a mission and reflects the sense of fragility that characterises the early stages of a brokered or enforced peace. Most, if not all, missions of this type begin with some kind of 'security pause' before moving on to social and economic initiatives.

However, it is also worth noting the many cases in which this pattern was not evident; that is, the cases where officers deployed in the initial stages saw little evidence of tension and others where officers deployed in later stages noticed it manifesting in certain areas. When asked about the effect that local militia had on policing in the early stages, one officer stationed on the Weather Coast (a hotbed of violence prior to RAMSI's arrival) said this: "I didn't really see or hear much of them. I knew that they were there but didn't really see much of them. Nothing they did generated any work for me or the local cops." Likewise, in response to the same question, an officer deployed to Honiara in the early stages of RAMSI simply stated: "We didn't have any problems in that respect."

These cases, in some ways, reverse traditional understandings of the peace-building process (including RAMSI's approach) and highlight the nuances and variations in that process. The finding should serve to caution against too rigid an approach to peace-building; identifying the need for vigilance at all stages of a mission and highlighting the various opportunities for grassroots peace-building to begin as soon as foreign intervention is initiated.

A further point to note is the number of officers who saw very little sign of tension, ethnic or otherwise, because they were posted to an area unaffected by the conflict. Given how disparate settlements in the Solomon Islands are, many of the officers interviewed were stationed in places where the Malaitan-Guale divide, and its political and economic repercussions, had little relevance. Officers posted to the outer extremities of the Islands spoke little, if at all, about the Malaitan-Guale divide or the militant factions. One officer described this situation as it was in Kirakira:

You were living in a community where whatever happens in Honiara or Canberra or Wellington has very little effect on these people. You can make all the rules you want and

lock up anyone you want in Honiara. It might filter back to the island because there is some relation there or some political connection but it wouldn't have a huge impact. If there was an impact, it would take weeks or months to get there.

A further comment was made by an officer deployed in various roles across the Islands:

[B]ecause there were no Guadalcanal people on Malaita, it wasn't that noticeable at the time we were there. I didn't really see much of that at all. In Honiara, it wasn't evident... I found that they were quite isolated. They got a lot of information through from Auki. But nothing that really had an impact. I couldn't say that they had any political influence at all. When they had the riots, it was only a small part of the community. The bigger community didn't really care.

This was a common point; that while riots or violence in Honiara may have attracted headlines, they had little effect on the day-to-day community work for New Zealand Police officers stationed there. The geographic separation between communities was such that national and international political affairs had little relevance to the lives of local people. As an officer in Rennell and Bellona illustrated, even at supposedly high-risk times, it was difficult to see evidence of the tension that had once dominated the political agenda:

We had local government elections and there's always the potential for tension around that. I arranged for additional staff from Honiara to come down. It was about increasing the policing presence. But again, it was far enough away from Honiara that the political dramas weren't really significant.

The majority of officers interviewed stated that most, if not all, of the incidents they dealt with stemmed, not from conflict at the national political level, but from issues arising locally. In these communities, officers spoke of problems stemming from domestic violence and alcohol with the 'Tensions' being distant and, to a large extent, irrelevant. Even an officer stationed on the Weather Coast, the centre of much of the violence from 1998-2003, said he saw no evidence of ethnic or sectarian hostility, instead spending most of his time responding to general crime reports and visiting remote outposts.

All of the officers interviewed mentioned alcohol, drugs and family violence as being key drivers of the work they were required to do. When asked what he believed to be the key issues facing Solomon Islands during his deployment, one officer made no mention of 'ethnic' conflict, instead saying this:

I said before that they have a problem with domestic violence, particularly with the fathers beating their kids. I attended a lot of homicides where the kids had died. That's where you have to change that attitude and basically look after the family. They're starting to get a bit of a drug problem; a bit of a cannabis problem, in particular. They grow their own cannabis like people do here. But meth was beginning to become a bit of a problem when I was there. They get onto homemade brew. A lot of the domestic violence comes from that.

Again, such findings highlight the intricacy of the peace-building process and reinforce the need for effective community policing in such contexts. While the 'ethnic' conflict may have carried some political significance, it was far less relevant in terms of how it presented at the community level. The above examples demonstrate the need to recognise underlying social and economic factors that weaken community cohesion in contexts such as these.

Beyond these challenges, officers were required to understand and adapt to the diversity of local cultures. This meant understanding how those communities functioned, the customs that guided their functioning and how those customs could be harnessed in a way that built peace and lent legitimacy to the criminal justice system. Many found this challenging although their responses indicate a willingness to adapt and find ways of empowering local communities and local cultures. Officers demonstrated a nuanced understanding of the communities they interacted with and, in their responses, tended to go beyond simplistic portrayals of village life; instead speaking of its diverse nature and the ways in which it was undergoing change.

A key point of difference noticed by many officers was that between the unique cultures seen in remote villages in the outer islands and the more fluid social climate of Honiara. Most of the officers interviewed had some kind of experience with both and they recognised that while traditional structures maintain a high degree of legitimacy in remote areas, they have been largely broken down in the squatter settlements and migrant communities based in and around the capital.

Even in remote island communities, officers noted that communities were undergoing a degree of change. In Rennell and Bellona, one officer made the following observation:

Every time we went somewhere, I would go and liaise with the head person in that area. In many respects, those traditional structures were breaking down. They weren't as strong as they had previously been. There would be elders within the community that were respected but there wasn't necessarily a chief that people looked up to or who exercised control over a village.

Other officers made similar comments, highlighting the sense of fluidity that characterised local Solomon Islands communities. They identified the challenges that individuals, especially young people faced as they tried to navigate this complex and rapidly changing social climate. One officer in Gizo discussed their observations of the wantok system by saying:

In Gizo itself, it was still present but it was less evident than when we went to the outer islands where they were pretty much all living as they had done for hundreds of years. The Chief is like a god and there's a lot of respect. But it's the whole big-city thing that when you get out of that nurtured environment where your customary role is very clear and you get to the city and it's less clear because there's all of these other Western influences that kind of muddy the waters a bit.

This is positive given the concerns raised earlier regarding how communities are conceived in the community policing model and in peace-building generally. As discussed in earlier chapters, contributors to the literature on community-building identify the potential for a 'community' focus to retrench or embed exclusive forms of community and, through this, undermine the development of a more peaceful social network. There appears to be little reason for concern in the case of RAMSI based on the findings from the interviews conducted here. Officers recognised that there was more to Solomon Islands than 'Malaitans' and 'Guale' and adapted their approach to local communities to respect this. The above example in Rennell and Bellona illustrates this point. Officers had to recognise that while the chiefly system was fundamental to authority and order in some communities, in others, they had to look for other avenues to engage the people in that area.

As discussed earlier, churches and religious organisations are active in the Solomon Islands political sphere and have acted as an important link between the national and local in Solomon Islands historically. Numerous observers have described the important role that religious groups played during the conflict and their involvement in the reconciliation process (Fraenkel 2004; Zaku 2006). They describe the church's role as being one of peace-builder; helping to bring warring parties together and provide aid to victims. Former Police Commissioner Peter Marshall described their role as being central to community cohesion:

The churches are the glue that keep the societies together in many ways... Sunday mornings: there are church bells, hundreds of people in their finest going to church and that has a strong resonance, even letters to the editor have that sort of religious twist to [them].

However, their role in the peace-building process diminished as both national and international actors focused their efforts more exclusively on the militant groups. When asked about this,

former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Phil Goff, stated that the feeling of the Australia and New Zealand governments was that by late 1999 the violence had escalated to a point where it was beyond the capabilities of the churches to manage, let alone resolve. This, he believed, necessitated an international response more directly focused on the militant groups (seen in the Townsville Peace Agreement) and then later, a comprehensive 'strengthened assistance' package (seen in RAMSI).

Despite this, churches continue to function as a foundation of civil society and community development in many communities in Solomon Islands and their importance was recognised by several of the officers interviewed. Their interactions with the churches provide an interesting insight into how they adapted to living and working in Solomon Islands communities.

Several officers interviewed made a conscious effort to visit the churches as a way of interacting with local people and encouraging their development as an important component of civil society. One officer stationed in Malu'u explained the value of the churches in establishing a relationship with the community:

When I first got there, the first thing I did was go to all the churches. I'm not a religious guy. But some of the churches I went to, no other white men had been to before. In respect to the community, they were fantastic. You could hear their frustrations in relation to the Solomon Islands Police. They complained that they weren't doing anything and were lazy.

As with other actors, however, the influence of the church is never one-dimensional and former Police Commissioner Peter Marshall, while acknowledging the various good works the church had achieved, also expressed some concern regarding their reluctance to condemn some of the more serious issues undermining peace in Solomon Islands, namely domestic violence. On this, the Commissioner (r) stated:

I think it's fair comment to say that the churches haven't really been as strong in their condemnation or outrage in terms of issues that have occurred and they have probably (not wanting to step into the political arena because the politics there are very dynamic, unforgiving and mercurial) but they have kept a pretty straight line. I think there is probably more the churches could do.

Out in remote communities, some officers opted to give the churches some distance; acknowledging their importance but preferring not to engage them as partners to resolve crime or build peace. One officer spoke of some of the difficulties that engaging with the churches posed for a sole-charge officer in a remote location:

[The churches] were active in the Solomons and there were very strong church groups in Rennell and Bellona where I was. I didn't attend any. Basically, if I had chosen to attend one church, then you run the risk of alienating the other groups. The alternative was attending every church and I didn't fancy going down that track either.

Several others expressed a similar view, stating that they saw the importance of the churches to the local people but felt no need to attend services or speak with church leaders.

Whether their reasons were personal or professional, the preference of these officers to remain separate from the church is an interesting finding. Given the observations of many in the academic literature as to the value of churches to the peace-building effort in Solomon Islands, it would seem as though an opportunity was missed by those officers who did not establish a relationship with them. In an environment where police resources are tightly stretched and confidence in the justice system is low, a relationship with the local churches would likely have been valuable. A reason for this is that the church leaders, as the centre of many remote Solomon Islands communities, may have been a valuable ally acting as intermediaries and helping to adapt and translate RAMSI's message to local villagers. These kinds of relationships are valuable both for individual officers who may struggle to adapt to the intricacies of local networks but also more broadly for the police and justice system who, by necessity, must rely on the input of other agencies to help in the effort to fight crime and maintain social order. More long-term, this relationship could have helped to empower churches and communities to work as civil society actors and contribute to the wider process of nation-building that will long outlast RAMSI.

However, it is not the intention here to evaluate the work done by officers. Instead, the aim is to learn about their experience, and the responses from officers who chose not to engage the churches do carry an important lesson; that is, the difficulty of police 'wearing too many hats'. While there are certain benefits that have been outlined above, the officers' responses highlight that there are significant limitations on the range of efforts that officers can make, especially in a context that is fragile, constantly changing and unfamiliar to officers. To both build and manage a proper working relationship with churches and church leaders would likely have taken significant time and required a range of skills on the part of officers. Even travelling to churches in the area may have been difficult given the distance and lack of basic transport infrastructure. The former Commissioner's concerns, likewise, highlight some of the pitfalls of establishing a relationship with organisations whose perspectives on human rights may differ from those that RAMSI are trying to encourage. The findings, therefore, highlight the need for caution in expecting such an approach from international police officers.

An area that all officers had to adapt to and interact with was the wantok system. In much of their work the wantok system was central and most, if not all, respondents recognised it as an important hallmark of the Solomon Islands social space but one which, for them, required some careful navigation. While officers recognised the benefit of tight social links, they also noted that these links could work against the efforts of Police:

Well the wantok is like the Maori whanau. It's just the family structure. It's very big over there and you could put it in line with the Maori whanau here. It doesn't matter what an offender has done, the wantok will look after him. It depends on the attitude of the leader of the wantok. It depends on how strong he is and what role he has within the family as to what will happen with that offender.

It was common for officers to highlight the challenges posed by the wantok system, as one officer stated:

The wantok system was a problem everywhere. If you had a constable that was from that island then policing that island was a real problem.

However, with time, officers' experience in these remote communities led many to recognise the legitimacy of customary justice systems and the continuing fragility of the formal justice sector. For several of them, customary hearings provided an opportunity to discuss the role of the formal justice system and the work that RAMSI was doing in building its capacity. One example, from an officer attending a customary hearing regarding the local Chief's son, demonstrated the value in talking to local communities about changes taking place at the institutional level and how they might have an impact locally. Involving RSIPF officers in these discussions further allowed for interaction between established local customs and the changing institutional structure. For the officer involved, the experience was valuable in both a professional and personal sense:

[The customary law hearing] was very interesting because that was the way they wanted to deal with it. It ended up costing the Chief's son a lot of money, pigs and food. It was actually quite an awesome experience to be involved in. It was resolved and the son wasn't killed. My RSIPF guy came with me to that. The whole village was there and people had come for miles because it was the Paramount Chief. My RSIPF spoke for about half an hour and just spoke to them about family violence and the way the law was changing. A whole lot of the elders had been injured and they thought that justice should be done. But the way that the Paramount Chief and the RSIPF guy dealt with it was well received by all and they were happy that they right thing had been done.

It was clear to officers across the New Zealand contingent, that *kastom* and communal systems of justice would have to play a significant role both in establishing peace and in maintaining the justice system over the long term. The challenges associated with resurrecting and embedding a Western-style centralised justice system were highlighted by many who were interviewed. They highlighted some of the problems of customary justice but showed a keen interest in finding and utilising the positives so as to lessen the pressure on the official justice system and encourage local communities to engage in the justice process.

The pattern often varied according to the location that officers were posted to with officers based in rural outposts relying on *kastom* far more extensively than those stationed in Honiara. Moves to utilise customary justice mechanisms are fraught with potential dangers, some of which will be explored further in later sections. Here, however, it is worthy to note many officers demonstrated a particularly nuanced understanding of local cultures and some of the dangers in relying too heavily on local justice. They were aware of the potential shortcomings of *kastom* in appropriately dealing with criminal behaviour but often went to the effort of looking for ways to mitigate those risks and thereby build a more local and more legitimate justice system.

The findings here serve to downplay the significance of cultural difference in international peace-building missions. While the literature raised concerns about the potential for harm to arise out of interactions between international police and local communities, the experience of New Zealand Police in Solomon Islands demonstrate the ability of individual officers to adapt to and carefully negotiate the finer points of the local social, political and cultural landscape. Officers recognised the diversity of local communities and sought to account for that diversity by engaging with both traditional and more recent local institutions.

Outreach and Inequality

The second question asks:

What strategies do international police employ to interact and engage with the local population and how do these strategies aim to contribute to an effective and equitable partnership between officers and citizens?

It aims to understand how an equal and fair policing service is delivered in circumstances where there is the potential for close partnerships between police and community to favour certain actors and deny others. In particular, it aimed to explore the strategies used to ensure that the service provided by New Zealand Police in Solomon Islands was fair and reached out to all of those who needed it. The literature highlighted how issues of equality and fairness are

sometimes undermined if police-community partnerships simply reflect existing power imbalances or accentuate the barriers faced by isolated parts of the community. While a community-oriented policing style necessitates close ties with community leaders and other influential people, it is important that those relationships do not work against the interests of others in the community, whose concerns may be less audible but still require a thorough police response. To prevent this requires a genuine effort on the part of police forces to engage all citizens and inform them of the role they can play in reducing crime and, in the case of Solomon Islands, building peace. In Solomon Islands, part of that effort would look to involve strategies that reach out to groups, notably women and children, whose concerns might otherwise be marginalised or ignored.

The concerns raised around unequal access to police services are particularly relevant in Solomon Islands given the significant social, political and cultural barriers that prevent many, especially women and children, from receiving equal protection under the law. Reports from Amnesty International describe the vulnerability of women and children in Honiara's slums and the casual attitude towards respect for human rights in the country. Amnesty International's (2011:4) 2011 Submission to the UN Periodic Review reported this story:

On 11 August 2010...a woman was beaten by her husband in one of Honiara's main streets, in full view of three police officers in a police vehicle. The officers did not intervene, but attended to the woman after the beating. They did not arrest the perpetrator. The officers refused to take her statement at the scene and asked her to come to the police station to give her statement.

The report also pointed out the reluctance of the Public Solicitor's Officer to represent victims of domestic violence unless victims could provide physical and visible evidence of the crime. For international police to reach beyond these barriers requires a concerted effort to both identify the problem and devise effective solutions.

It was clear to most officers that barriers of this kind were hindering access to police services for women and children in the villages they were based in. One spoke of how it was practice, on entering a village, to speak with the men first and seek their permission before interacting with local women:

You go into a local village and you have to speak to the males first. You don't talk to the females. Once you've spoken to the males and they're relaxed, then you can talk to the wives and the kids.

This example demonstrates the potential for international policing to further entrench the barriers facing women and children. By adhering to the protocols of patriarchy, international police officers, both implicitly and explicitly, lend it a degree of legitimacy. Their interaction with men over the women sends a powerful message as to who holds proper authority. In practical terms, this message may be enough to discourage women or children from coming forward with reports of crime. It also places them in an even more vulnerable position, should they themselves be accused.

However, with both the officer cited above and the rest of the group interviewed, it appeared that such gestures were kept to a minimum, and that officers were more than aware of the significant barriers facing women and children in local communities.

In most of the interviews conducted here, the tight-knit and patriarchal nature of families in Solomon Islands was noted and it was clear that it was preventing police from picking up on violent or abusive behaviour in that environment. The issue was particularly concerning for officers dealing with cases of sexual violence, where customary justice mechanisms saw the issue negotiated between the heads of the victim's and offender's family, often with little involvement of the victim or the police. As described earlier, there are numerous benefits to customary justice mechanisms and there was enthusiasm on the part of New Zealand Police officers to utilise them. However, it was evident that there were cases where New Zealand officers felt that that response was incapable of providing a fair justice process to people in rural areas. Often, monetary reconciliation was enough for the issue to be considered resolved by the local figures of authority. One officer stationed at Malu'u expressed a form of helplessness at this situation:

In their cultures, someone's daughter could be raped and they would be angry. Shell money could make up for all of that and calm the situation down. So that's how they operate. In the case of [one] rape victim, the victim's father was telling us that she was an imbecile. So there's that mentality and whether it's right or wrong, that's the way it works.

Officers based in Honiara spoke less about the barriers facing women and children but did highlight other issues affecting equality in treatment by the police and the wider justice system. Firstly, officers spoke of how people in Honiara were more likely to be charged with crimes in the formal justice system as the logistical constraints were much lower than those associated with charging people in remote areas.

Despite RAMSI's efforts to encourage a fair and impartial policing service, there remains a reluctance to pursue charges against people of influence. One situation, relayed by an officer

based in Kukum, highlighted the extent of the issue, in particular the very real fear that the individual police officers in Solomon Islands feel at having to carry out their jobs:

I was working with some RAMSI police officers from the Cook Islands. We stopped a person driving who was intoxicated. He was the Ombudsman. We took him back and we had no hesitation taking him back even though he made it loud and clear that he was the Ombudsman. Solomon Islands Police officers would have been very scared to deal with him. We took him back to the Kukum Police station and informed them of who we had. You could see straight away that they were very, very uncomfortable... I can't remember if we left him there or were called away to something but, sure enough, when we had returned later on, they had let him go.

Another officer told a similar story about a former militant in Honiara:

One of the major instigators of the violence over there lived in Honiara. He ran a construction business. He lived there and they knew who he was and there were all of these charges against him. They don't lock him up because it will cause too much strife.

In other cases, New Zealand Police officers noticed local RSIPF officers would favour members of their local wantok meaning that reports of some crimes would often be ignored or never recorded if they involved an officer's family member. One officer, a detective investigating historic homicide cases, stated:

Within the police over there, the thing that you have to watch is how the family connections influence people's decisions. A lot of the information comes from hearsay and it's what family members say. It's not necessarily coming from the offender. So you have to weigh things up really carefully and look at things from different angles and think outside the square when dealing with people.

These examples illustrate how an emphasis on community strength and respect of local hierarchies can undermine the justice process for individuals. While there is always a balance to be achieved between individual rights and broader social harmony, it is worthwhile to note the many ways in which this balance can be undermined at the street level and how that affects the path to justice and peace for groups that struggle to gain a fair hearing in the political and public space.

In much of this, there was very little that New Zealand Police felt they were able to do to improve the situation. In their mentoring role, they aimed to encourage an impartial approach to policing but it was apparent that many felt it was the expectations of the local community

that were at the heart of the problem, with many locals believing that that was how both the justice system and wider society should operate. For that reason, there was a sense of powerlessness among many of the officers interviewed.

One case, however, demonstrated the potential for change and the role that international police officers could play in helping to facilitate that change. A female New Zealand Police officer, stationed in Gizo, spoke of how a small group of local female RSIPF officers came to her with the idea of establishing a women's refuge facility in Western Province. After being approached, the officer helped to provide administrative, as well as motivational, support:

They wanted to create a house or refuge type thing. I picked that up and ran with them. I tried to give as much advice as I could on how to approach it. They just started with wanting a house and all these other things. I just told them to work step-by-step and build up towards a house. We went down the track of bringing in the community by talking to churches because churches are good over there. Other community groups and NGOs were helpful. We got a kind of committee together and documented a common purpose so that they had goals.

Her work in this area is an example of the vital role that international police can play in encouraging and empowering locals to bring about change. It shows the lengths that are sometimes required of individual officers if they are to be able to reach beyond existing power structures and affect substantive progress for the people most in need.

Much of this work rested upon a strong personal relationship between the officers and the New Zealand Police officer's responses show a high degree of empathy for the women and the cause that they were trying to push:

The two main women that approached me had both been victims of family violence themselves and one of them was still in that marriage. I became really good friends with them and spent a lot of time with them and we would have good discussions about it. They tried to make me understand that this was the way it was and that it wasn't custom but that it was accepted. But they could see that it wasn't right ...[I]tried to instil in those women that they actually could have a voice and could work towards making things better.

The case also demonstrates some of the pitfalls of this work. While the effort was genuine and there was a real desire for change from within the small group of women who raised the idea, it was evident that there were significant obstacles in the way and that, ultimately, these obstacles would undermine the effort of the local women. According to the New Zealand Police officer involved, resistance came from several quarters.

Local people, government officials, church leaders and even colleagues within the RSIPF were identified as being the primary barriers. The idea of a facility for victims of sexual abuse and domestic violence was a source of tension for those who favoured a more conservative approach to family and community relations. There was, according to the New Zealand Police officer involved, a real fear that the facility would undermine social harmonies by encouraging women to leave their families. She described her understanding of the situation by saying:

[It was] the thought that maybe this was aimed at breaking families up, which is not unlike how it is here. People think that all the refuges do is break families up. It wasn't about that. It was about providing a respite. In the refuge, they wanted to have counselling and medical and psychological support that could help mend families but I guess it's just the psyche.

The officer expressed her disappointment that the refuge facility was not able to be established, despite receiving funding from an Australian non-government organisation. The disappointment left the officer sceptical of future progress in Solomon Islands and concerned for the well-being of women in that area.

Cases such as these illustrate some of the challenges that a community-led policing model can have in engaging all parts of a community. The same actors that allow international police access to a community can also work to limit that community's access to resources beyond their own. Such actions can have serious implications for the safety and security of those who are deprived but preventing them goes well beyond the mandate of international police. The example above highlights the flaw in using a community-oriented model in a context such as this. Even when the model functions well, and local community members feel empowered to report concerns to international police, there remain powerful social and political structures seeking to preserve the status quo. For individual officers, this can be a disheartening and disillusioning process. Even well-intentioned and well-conceived initiatives, such as the one above, will struggle to survive if they challenge existing power structures in local communities.

A further lesson to be drawn from these findings, however, is the value of strong personal relationships and a degree of trust (discussed further in the next section) that enables victims to feel comfortable with reporting their stories to international police. Much of RAMSI's work has been dominated by international best practice on policing and peace-building; combining strategies for institutional capacity development with well-resourced and well-organised personnel. The officers' efforts here demonstrated an ability to go beyond the technical requirements of peace-building and embrace the interpersonal component in a way not set out in any of RAMSI's programmes. This required, more than anything, a strong personal commitment to the welfare and well-being of local women. The officer's ability to identify the

issue and their commitment to seeing it resolved was crucial to improving the police service to a small, but vulnerable, group of women and children in Solomon Islands. In this respect, while the refuge centre may never have been established, the commitment shown by the officer may have had some success in empowering those women who may have otherwise said nothing of the abuse they suffered. In such a context, successes like these should serve to highlight the value officers who are willing and able to go beyond the technical components of community policing and embrace the personal element. It was this element that allowed the issue of domestic violence to be raised in a way that may have otherwise never occurred.

Trust

In a similar way to question two, the third research question, on trust, looks to understand what efforts were made by New Zealand Police to build a stronger relationship with the community in which they operated. The question asks:

What efforts were made by the international police to overcome, alter or reinforce existing perceptions of the police and how were these efforts adapted to, and affected by, local context?

It builds on the findings of the previous two questions but focuses in particular on how officers exercised and constrained their power and what they believed was an appropriate role for an international police officer to play in local Solomon Islands communities.

Gaining a community's trust can be challenging for police forces in any context. As outlined earlier, the community policing literature questioned the ability of police forces to overcome entrenched distrust and highlighted how existing perceptions of police can pose difficulties for officers trying to build relationships with the public. The issues are no less significant for New Zealand Police in Solomon Islands where many in the RSIPF misused their power and, as a result, lost much of the people's confidence. There is therefore a need for sensitivity on the part of foreign police as well as a recognition of the position of power they occupy over their host community. In such a context, it is difficult to know whether international police officers will be treated with the same suspicion as their local counterparts or regarded highly by the local population because of the sense of independence.

Since RAMSI's arrival, trust in the police force has been measured by the Annual People's Survey (see, for example: RAMSI 2011). The surveys illustrate high levels of support for RAMSI's presence in the country. A majority of people across Solomon Islands reported that they would be comfortable reporting a crime to the PPF. Trust in the RSIPF, however, remains relatively low with 40 per cent of respondents expressing reluctance to report crimes to them because of a

belief that it will not bring about a satisfactory resolution (RAMSI 2009). The number of people who believe that the RSIPF treat people fairly and with respect has steadily declined since 2007 (RAMSI 2009). It is difficult for the RSIPF to operate effectively over the long-term without the trust of the people and this continues to lag behind support for the PPF by a significant margin.

Looking deeper into the issue reveals that trust figured very heavily in the day-to-day work of RAMSI. Officers had to be constantly aware of the position of power they occupied and exercise their authority in a way that reassured, rather than threatened, the local population. In 2005, an Australian Federal Police officer deployed in Solomon Islands, Louise Curragh, told reporters: "We are given a lot of power and authority. Sometimes we have to take a step back. We can't be dictators. Otherwise we could destroy this country (Dusevic 2005)." It appears that a similar awareness prevailed within the New Zealand contingent with respondents stressing the need for international police to exercise caution and avoid exerting dominance both over the local community and local police. The concern was present at all levels of the mission. Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time Phil Goff highlighted the difficult balance that had to be achieved:

[Y]ou were always having to ask the question too; do we have the mandate actually to take this next step because we are not responsible for this country? This is not our country... we had quite a lot of public sympathy but we knew that it was really important to keep that broad public sympathy because if we ever lost that, then our position in the Solomons would be pretty untenable. And I think RAMSI right through pretty much maintained that level of on-the-ground public support for what we were trying to do. People understood that we were there for the right reason not the wrong reason.

It is interesting to note that a similar attitude was present within the officers at the street level. Many expressed a sense of reluctance at having to police in that environment as they believed that, ethically, it was not their position to be doing so.

In both their work as community officers and as mentors, officers found themselves in positions where they had to exercise caution in order to avoid imposing their values upon local people. Every day, police officers are forced to exercise discretion in their judgment. How to decide on such matters was complicated by a feeling that it was not the place of New Zealand Police to be ruling on what were essentially issues of 'right' and 'wrong'.

One officer, based in Kirakira, could see that there was some moral ambiguity about the work and spoke of the need for respect and tolerance when deployed in such a role:

In some ways it's a kind of arrogance on our part to impose our values on their society but that's what we're doing and that's what we're still doing. We're still trying to get across that

bashing your wife isn't right. But it's like telling a Catholic that the Buddhist faith is the right way to go. It's difficult to instil that and you can't do it instantly. Even in our society now, we still have guys that beat their wives. We're not perfect. So how do you encourage that in a population and a belief system that has had it for generations. You have to be tolerant about those sorts of things.

Another described his approach by saying:

At the end of the day, it's their country. That's what I tried to instil. I told them: "I'm here. I don't want to tell you what to do because it's your country. You tell me what you need and I'll try and help you to get there."

While the issue of trust was a difficult one for many officers, most felt they were able to build upon the positive esteem in which the mission was held. They went about this in various ways. It appears from their responses that their efforts to build trust were less about strategy and more about general sociability. This meant relying on basic social skills, rather than professional policing skills and involved conversing, interacting and playing with people as a way of reassuring them of their positive intentions. Travelling to remote villages, some of which had not been visited by a police officer for many years, was a small step taken by many officers but one which had a positive effect in establishing a rapport between local people and New Zealand Police officers. Once there, officers could make inquiries or seek out complainants but, in many cases, did little more than play football or "chew the fat". In other places officers went beyond what would usually be expected of them as police and engaged communities in much more informal ways. These gestures, it seems, were crucial to establishing a rapport with local people and, through this, trust.

Police Commissioner Peter Marshall spoke of the close affinity between New Zealand officers and Solomon Islanders and the ways in which this was helped by the neighbourhood parties, discos and barbecues organised by the New Zealand contingent. For many, their work extended beyond their hours on-duty, as the Police Commissioner describes:

As with most RAMSI Police representatives, New Zealanders did a lot in their own time, raising money, organising books and medical supplies and there was an off-duty element which was very much appreciated.

Some officers spoke of bringing back local officers to the PPF base at Guadalcanal Beach Resort for a meal while others spent their time conversing with locals late at night. In these

interactions it was often the most simple of gestures that were the most important. Officers felt comfortable that the way they treated local people would be reciprocated towards them.

One officer's experience in particular is testament to the value of this approach in gaining people's trust. The officer, stationed in Malu'u, spoke of how a man named Alex came to form a strong bond with the officer, despite the fact that Alex was known to have shot several people dead in a Honiara hospital and was wanted by the Australian Federal Police. Numerous operations led by the Australian military had failed to capture him due to the extent of local support, yet he continued to associate with the New Zealand Police officer, at one point taking him on a walk into the bush to show him the graves of former local chiefs. The officer described the dynamics of the relationship by saying:

Alex became a good friend of mine and he was quite valuable. I was getting quite a lot of intel from him. I told him about this guy and he told me that he could get a meeting... All that this guy wanted was his money and the police acknowledged that they owed him this money. If he was paid, he would give himself up. I told Honiara that he would only speak to me because of the trust. A few weeks later, an operation with helicopters and boats failed to find him again.

Another officer described an effort he made to support a local Chief to encourage the youth in his village to play sport.

Soccer is very big over there. I spoke to the Chief and he wanted to get something going for the youth who had nothing to do. So for two days, I took the RSIP guy and the Tongan guy with me and we took all our tools out there. We had a weed-whacker and spades and shovels and had a working bee for two days. We turned a half-size football field into a full-size football field that was flat. We must have shifted trailer-loads of soil. And we cut trees down and turned it into a beautiful big soccer field. We got the community involved and the youth involved so it was good.

The officer's experience demonstrates the very practical steps that can be taken to build trust between an international police contingent and the host community. It also demonstrates, however, the numerous other benefits that flow from that relationship. In this particular case, the officer noted the value inherent in getting the community involved in providing a facility for their young people. Through the rapport that had been established, local people felt more comfortable and more capable of engaging with him and his RSIPF counterparts:

[W]ith the soccer field, I got people to talk because of it. That's what it was all about. If there was an issue, a lot of times they won't tell you because they don't know how you'll react.

As with inequality and fairness, it was often what the officers did outside of their professional role that was the most valuable in engaging local communities. Here, lending a hand to establish a facility for local youth had implications far beyond the provision of a recreation area for youth. By encouraging people to talk, the effort helped to establish a more positive relationship between that community and the police, both national and international. Building these relationships is at the core of the community policing model because they contribute positively to both community safety and development. In this case, however, it is likely that there is also a positive flow-on effect for peace-building. While this effect was not directly measured here, the officer's observations that people talked more as a result of the effort certainly provides an indication that this community-oriented approach was encouraging the development of a stronger social network and, through this, contributing to the development of a sustainable peace.

The finding also highlights the difficult nature of establishing trust between international police and local communities in that it cannot be easily achieved through any kind of programmatic design. The decentralised organisational structure (discussed below) certainly helped by stationing officers in remote communities and affording them the freedom to interact with local communities. However, it was the personal attributes and interpersonal skills of individual officers that was crucial to the development of trust. The simple act of treating people in the way that they themselves would expect to be treated may seem insignificant. But in a context where, historically, relationships between police and the community have been fragile, it is these simple gestures that have the most powerful effect. The finding highlights the need to deploy officers with these inter-personal qualities; without officers like this, the more substantive work of community-building is impossible. As one officer stated:

[O]ut in the outpost, it was community policing at its best. You look at things from a local perspective and you start them down that track because controlling the streets is only compliance; it's not commitment.

Cooperation and Coordination

The final question asks:

How do international police officers manage their relationships with other contributing agencies (including other national policing contingents, local police and military support) so

as to ensure a consistent and co-ordinated policing service is provided to the host community?

It looks at the challenges of cooperation and coordination faced by New Zealand Police officers in their interaction with other policing contingents. Deployed as both frontline staff or as advisors, New Zealand Police officers were tasked with building the capacity of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force; a task that involved not only the re-building of organisational structures but also the re-establishing of a professional police ethic throughout the organisation.

Capacity and Confidence in the Development of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force.

Building the capacity of the RSIPF has been one RAMSI's primary goals since the mission's deployment and this meant it was important that New Zealand Police officers built a productive professional relationship with those of the RSIPF. Coordinating the efforts of the two organisations and implementing a cohesive policing strategy, however, did prove challenging for many of the officers interviewed here.

Policing in Solomon Islands, both pre- and post-conflict, has been affected by low institutional capacity and minimal state resourcing. While RAMSI was able to provide some support in this regard, the logistical challenges of deploying skilled staff and resources to remote locations across Solomon Islands meant that the RSIPF faced a severe shortage of equipment and competent officers. In remote outposts, officers, both local and international, struggled to reach villages within their jurisdiction due to the shortage of suitable transport and fuel. Many of the RSIPF staff lacked even basic Police equipment such as a notebook, pen or uniform. Computers were present in some outposts and could be used to type up reports, however, the lack of basic communication infrastructure meant they were of little benefit. One officer tasked with managing the Kukum Traffic Base told of how, of the 31 staff based there, only 13 had a driver's licence. Most significant was the shortage of police housing, which officers were entitled to under their employment agreements. Commissioner Peter Marshall cited this as the most significant shortage limiting the development of a professional and capable police force in Solomon Islands. Not only did a lack of police housing undermine the operational effectiveness of the RSIPF, it also made it more difficult for wantok influences to be ameliorated.

The shortages were a significant source of frustration for many New Zealand officers based in remote areas of Solomon Islands. They, along with the RSIPF counterparts, were more than willing to make the journey to remote communities if they had been provided with the appropriate means to do so:

The biggest challenge was lack of resources. Because, unfortunately, the RSIP are not funded to do their job. They just don't have the resources to do it. Case in point was the boat [at my outpost] in Lofung which was not suitable. I was there in October and their fuel had run out. Their next allocation wasn't until January. So from November to January, how are they supposed to do their job when to do it they need a boat? They've got guys who are willing and keen and able but they're not resourced to do it.

The resource shortages faced by the RSIPF sat within a much broader set of challenges facing the justice system as a whole. New Zealand officers continually expressed frustration at the difficulty of proceeding with even minor charges knowing that the justice system was largely incapable of dealing with cases in a timely fashion. One officer, stationed in Rennell and Bellona, outlined the sense of futility that many officers expressed in their capacity development work:

Where we were, we would prosecute offenders [and] the travelling magistrate would come round once or twice a year. You might have an offence that happened in January, that wasn't going to be heard until June. You would have to summons people to an unknown date. When you found out when the Magistrate was going to turn up, you had to go around and re-summons everybody and if you wanted to get them to turn up, you would have to go and pick them up, be they; witnesses, defendants, or victims. We could do that because we had a Participating Police Force vehicle but the Solomon Islands Police Force did not have those resources. So in terms of sustainability; it's not sustainable.

Sustainability was a concern for many New Zealand officers who felt that the level of funding and resourcing required to sustain the system RAMSI was attempting to establish was simply unrealistic for Solomon Islands at that time. The support provided by Australia and other Pacific partners was acknowledged as being of huge benefit in the short-term, however, few officers interviewed could see how RAMSI's level of mobility and capability could be mirrored by the RSIPF on RAMSI's withdrawal. Resources shortages and huge logistical challenges were, as highlighted above, not unique to the RSIPF but instead pervaded the wider justice system and indeed much of the public service.

The logistics involved in resurrecting a functioning professional police force in such an institutionally weak and geographically disparate country meant that a lack of resources was not far from most New Zealand Police officers' experiences in Solomon Islands. However, what featured even more strongly in the accounts from New Zealand Police officers was a serious lack of confidence among both frontline and management staff in the RSIPF.

The morale of the force had been severely undermined during the violent period of the Tensions. Former Police Commissioner Peter Marshall described the poor state that the RSIPF was in upon RAMSI's arrival:

[T]hey were pretty bruised and battered as a result of the very recent 2003 culmination of the Tension period and these were people who had turned on themselves. The former Commissioner had been assassinated in Auki by a man called Sae who is still on the run. There were all sorts of beatings by Police officers against other Police officers and communities against Police officers.... [During the Tensions] the RSIPF had been directly or indirectly, legitimately or illegitimately, responsible for the deaths of around 30-50 people, shootings and so forth... So they were a dispirited, dysfunctional, defeated organisation.

Most frontline officers interviewed agreed that officer morale within the RSIPF was very low. Because of the lack of morale (and in many cases because of a lack of pay), officers had little motivation to commit to their role in a professional manner. In turn, the community's expectations of the RSIPF were low, meaning that there was little consequence for staff who failed to perform their duties in a professional manner. As one officer stated:

When I first arrived; the staff sometimes turned up, they were sometimes in uniform, they sometimes stayed all day, and sometimes they did some work.

Rather than dismiss this as laziness or incompetence, New Zealand Police saw the lack of enthusiasm as stemming from a lack of confidence; that is, many RSIPF staff felt themselves incapable of performing the tasks they had been trained to do.

In this sense, the work of many New Zealand Police in Solomon Islands became more about confidence-building than capacity-building. Most officers interviewed said that while there were shortages of skills and resources in some areas, their primary goal was to encourage individual officers so that they felt capable to conduct the work required of them. They noted local officers often knew how to carry out a task but lacked the impetus to perform it themselves. Leadership was often poor with management-level officers having little control over their staff and very little motivation to improve the service provided to the community.

In the vast majority of cases, the impressions New Zealand Police had of local police were very positive, and often reflected a personal investment in the development of the RSIPF officers they dealt with. One officer, working in forensics, said this of his RSIPF counterparts:

What I found mostly was that they were very intelligent and they picked up on things very quickly. But whether they had the gumption to take it any further was another matter. A lot of the time, they relied on other people to do it.

In cases such as this, the ability to mentor, rather than direct, local staff became increasingly important as a way of building self-confidence within individual officers and, through this, the capacity of the organisation as a whole. This mentoring role was described by one officer as such:

Often you would go to an incident and they would want you to take the lead role. But I would guide them through how to do it. I remember one wanted me to take a statement but because he was so quiet and didn't have any confidence, I got him to do it with me there. He was really happy after that. He sort of felt that he had really accomplished something.....I think passing on knowledge and skills and letting them know that they can do the job – building their confidence - [was my biggest success]. And I saw it in some of the guys I worked with in the Solomon Islands Police. I got the impression when I left that they were better police officers than they were before RAMSI got there and I hope that carries on.

Another officer, based at the Kukum Traffic Base, described running a traffic check point outside the station every morning. The check point, the officer described, was of little practical benefit as offenders were unlikely to be caught in that location. It was, however, a way for officers stationed there to become accustomed to proactively engaging with the community; proving to both themselves and the wider public that they could perform the tasks required of them.

This focus on confidence-building meant encouraging officers to take pride in their work and strive to meet the standards expected of them as a professional police force. It required officers to go beyond the technical and organisational components of capacity development and show a personal commitment to the professional development of individual officers; a commitment which flowed not from policy or strategic directives but, in the vast majority of cases, from the close rapport between RSIPF officers and their New Zealand advisors.

While there was much that challenged the New Zealand Police in their role, the personal bonds between themselves and the RSIPF staff they advised enabled them to navigate much easier the complex political and bureaucratic environment in which the mission was conducted. These complexities were particularly acute for some of the female officers interviewed. One female staff noted that the gender divide appeared to be significant for some of the men she worked with. She stated:

Some of the men weren't as friendly. The ones I worked with certainly were but if there was a crossover with the different sections that I didn't get to work with very often then they were just a bit reserved. Not unfriendly, just reserved. It could have been the female thing.

As with other challenges, however, the solution often came down to relationship-building. Another female officer described her situation by saying:

I was concerned about going into a situation where I had a Solomon Islander, an older male with rank in the Police force, and I was supposed to go in as an advisor, and as a younger woman, and tell him what he was supposed to be doing. We worked around that. In terms of managing that situation, it was about relationship-building initially. That meant trying to get him onside. After that I tried to avoid being directive. So rather than saying "This is what needs to happen...", I would approach it in a less direct way and we would have a discussion about what we would like to see happening and what changes could be made to make the job easier.

The everyday challenges of operating as an international police officer were often mitigated due to the support provided by local counterparts. In turn, it was only with the trust and respect of RSIPF staff that officers found they were able to make progress in improving the functioning of local police stations and ultimately advance the mission's goals.

These personal bonds between international and local staff transcend strategic or tactical considerations but were crucial to the maintenance of peace in Solomon Islands and the progression of RAMSI's mandate. In cases such as Solomon Islands, where fragile institutions and decentralised command structures have in the past allowed for the denigration of professionalism and the disintegration of organisational unity, these personal relationships formed the bond that tied individual officers to the staff they worked alongside. While they may seem insignificant in the context of the challenges faced by the RSIPF and Solomon Islands as a whole, in many cases it appears that these personal bonds were the only link between RAMSI's peace-building mandate and local community life in Solomon Islands.

The simple act of imbuing officers with a sense of belonging within Police culture was of vital importance in the establishment of a professional ethic within the RSIPF. In strategic terms, it forms part of the intangible, and often unseen, challenges of capacity development but one which can ultimately determine the outcome of a mandate. In Solomon Islands, it appears that the role New Zealand Police played in building relationships, both on- and off-duty, provided a first step for the RSIPF that could not have easily been achieved using technical models or best-practice peace-building templates. This personal component was, in many ways, an incidental

outcome of the mission but one which appears to have been crucially important in establishing the impetus for progress and change within the professional ethic of the RSIPF and the communities they serve.

Coordination, Compatibility and the Community Policing Ethic

While the interface between international and local police was of critical importance to the ongoing success of the mission's work, more immediate challenges lay in how to bring about a coordinated and coherent policing style within the PPF itself. While these challenges are often of a logistical or administrative nature, the focus here is on the compatibility between different approaches to community and community-building. For New Zealand Police, the challenge lay in integrating their understanding of community policing into that of the much larger Australian contingent, represented primarily by the Australian Federal Police.

The task of integrating various national contingents under one mission mandate is a common problem facing missions of this kind (Rubinstein et al. 2008), and one that is not limited to the frontline. At a planning level, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Phil Goff, spoke of how the relationship between Australia and New Zealand, as it pertained to the conflict in Solomon Islands, had always been a cooperative one. The Minister worked closely with Australian Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer, to devise an appropriate response to the violence and build regional support for the action. Concerns regarding Australian dominance have been voiced in various forums since the outset of the mission and there appears to have been an element of this at the planning level with the former Minister, Phil Goff, commenting:

I think that the Australian government was worried at the time that we were going to do another Bougainville. I don't know why they were worried about that because what we did in Bougainville had been incredibly effective. But the Australians felt they were the pre-eminent country in the Pacific and really it was their responsibility and that they should be doing it. So that created a little bit of tension. But we worked closely with the Australians. They were able to do what we couldn't do because they had the resources to do it.

A further issue was the identification of New Zealand Police by way of a 'Kiwi' badge; a symbol used widely by both the New Zealand Police and military when deployed abroad. There appears to have been some trepidation at the planning level regarding New Zealand Police being identified in such a way. Former Police Commissioner Peter Marshall stated:

They wore the New Zealand Police uniform. They wore the RAMSI insignia but they also had the big kiwi to identify them as being Kiwi/New Zealand Police officers. This was an important point from our position. Initially there was some sort of discussion from the

RAMSI administration as to whether New Zealand should have the kiwi but we insisted upon it and that was good.

As is discussed below, the badge became an important point of difference between Australian and New Zealand Police staff and one that was easily identified by the local community. Despite this difference, the Commissioner spoke highly of the work of the Australian Federal Police (as well as that of other national contingents) and commended their leadership of the mission as a whole.

At the street level, the advanced operational compatibility of the New Zealand Police and Australian Federal Police was critical to securing the security situation and maintaining order in areas previously dominated by the militias. New Zealand officers interviewed spoke highly of the competency and capabilities of the Australian Federal Police as well as those officers from other Pacific contingents. The operation as a whole was well resourced by the Australian military and many New Zealand officers told how much of their work would have been impossible without the support of their Australian counterparts, both military and civilian. The compatibility between Australian and New Zealand police contingents is reflective of a history of close ties between the two organisations and, more broadly, the overarching context of collegiality between the two countries in the international arena.

However, while operational and organisational compatibility was achieved and maintained throughout the operation, it seems that a consistent approach to community engagement and capacity development was more difficult to attain. Many of the officers interviewed discussed the differences in approach to community policing between themselves and the Australian Federal Police. They believed the AFP officers were less popular with both the local community and the RSIPF. One officer, tasked with visiting villages across the Weather Coast, had this to say:

It was unique to find myself in the position of Team Leader on the Weather Coast and it's purely because the locals preferred to deal with Kiwis as opposed to Australians. They weren't shy in saying that they were arrogant and that they didn't like them. There was certainly ill-feeling towards the Australians who were trying to tell them what to do. I think they saw us as being a bit different. We're not big brother, we're not right next door, we don't have a vested interest, and we're more approachable. That was the view that I got from the Chiefs that I was dealing with.

A 'dictatorial' policing style and a lack of enthusiasm to engage the community, participants believed, was the main cause for the poor reputation of Australian Police among the local

population: “They would come in and say ‘[T]his is how you do things’”. Some officers also highlighted the experience New Zealand Police have had in working in and with a multi-cultural society. They stated that, in general terms, New Zealanders are more familiar engaging people from different cultures, namely Maori and Pacific Island, and this helped when it came to interacting with local Solomon Islanders. One officer, of Polynesian descent, commented:

For me, we were there to win hearts and minds but because I come from a Polynesian background, it did help to open doors. Just being a Maori and a Kiwi opened so many doors. We used to have kiwis painted on our trucks and it took a while until the Australians realised that the only trucks not getting bottles thrown at them were the Kiwi ones...But that was the sort of privilege that the Kiwis worked with.

It was a similar situation for officers with no Polynesian or Maori ancestry yet who wore the Kiwi badge on their uniform:

I think that’s what made my job easy because I had a Kiwi on my uniform. As soon as people saw that, there was a different attitude towards you. Even though I was a white, bald guy; it didn’t matter as long as I had a Kiwi. They knew they could talk to me because they knew I would listen.

Most officers said the kiwi badges they wore were their greatest asset as it had a profound effect on how they were perceived by the locals. With the RSIPF, Australian officers tended to get frustrated with the lack of action from the local officers and, in response, would either become demanding or lose interest in capacity-building.

The differing experiences between Australian and New Zealand Police in this regard demonstrate that the need for cultural sensitivity and understanding is paramount when deployed in a role such as this. It also further reinforces the importance of a high degree of mutual respect between international and local staff. Many officers told of how they felt reluctant to be deployed in a role that saw them advising Solomon Islanders on how to police their own communities. They stressed, however, that conflict was avoided because of the regard in which they were held by local communities and because of the regard in which they held local staff. The point was made well by one officer who commented:

You’re working in an environment where you have, literally, strangers coming into your country and telling you to do your job a particular way, which often conflicts with what you have always known. Our attitudes to crime and social conflicts differ significantly from theirs. That message isn’t going to get across without a degree of respect.

Again, the findings here highlight the importance of looking beyond the technical aspects of capacity-development and peace-building. In logistical and operational terms, the Australian and New Zealand Police contingents were well coordinated. Achieving this kind of coherence in regard to their respective approaches to community policing was much more difficult and created a noticeable discrepancy in the two forces were treated by the local population. The close personal rapport New Zealand Police officers had with the RSIPF staff and with the local population went some way towards ameliorating the challenges they faced as an international police force in a diverse and fragile local context.

Conclusion

The analysis produced mixed results in answer to the questions posed in the literature review. In some areas, the issues raised in the wider literature could be seen in the experiences of New Zealand Police officers deployed in Solomon Islands. The difficulties of achieving a coherent approach to community engagement across the mission is one example in which the literature's concern appears warranted. A further example is that whereby officers sought to seek out the Chiefs or Big Men in a village before speaking to the others. While it appears that such efforts were driven by a desire to respect local cultures, there remains the potential for such an approach to send a powerful message to those not in positions of authority, notably women and children, as to their role in the peace-building process.

In other areas, there appears to be less cause for concern based on the information provided here. A key concern raised in the literature was the potential for a community-oriented international force to further entrench simplistic social boundaries and, in doing so, contribute to harmful forms of social cohesion. Instead, officers showed a nuanced understanding of the complexities and diversity of local communities. They identified the key hallmarks of local communities and the ways in which these changed from village to village. They also made observations regarding how these communities were undergoing change in response to both internal and external influences. This understanding was important, not only for avoiding conflict, but also for gaining trust. Many of the officers spoke of the closeness between themselves and the communities they worked in. The relationship was based on simple gestures and personal touches. There were concerns that it would be difficult for international police to overcome existing negative attitudes towards the Police, given the history of mistrust in the RSIPF. While there will always be issues in this regard, the examples highlighted here served to allay much of the concern in this regard. The lengths officers went to to support these communities demonstrates the importance of people in the peace-building process. This finding, as well as others, is discussed further in the concluding chapter.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to understand more about the experience of individual police officers deployed as part of an international post-conflict peace-building mission. Where other research has focused on the theoretical and logistical implications of post-conflict policing, few studies have looked into how police staff on the ground deal with the changes in role and responsibility.

The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands was used as a case study to examine how officers from New Zealand Police adapted and engaged with the unique social, political and cultural environment presented to them in Solomon Islands. To assess this, an effort was made to explore in some depth both the context of community life in Solomon Islands and the components of the policing style that defined much of RAMSI's work.

The first chapter, "Communities and Conflict in Solomon Islands", spent some time reviewing Solomon Islands' recent history and analysing various perspectives on the sources of violent conflict that came to a head in 1998. The chapter found that, contrary to the common media portrayal of the conflict, ethnicity was a poor explanation for the sources of grievance and for the inability of the conflict to be contained. Instead, it was the culmination of a number of political and economic factors that served to empower certain factions within the Solomon Islands public sphere. Politically, governments remained remote from the people they controlled and their survival often relied on a tenuous coalition of disparate, sometimes divergent, interests. Economically, decades of foreign ownership of primary industry had created an unsustainable cycle of extraction. The economy provided little in the way of government revenue or export earnings for the fragile Solomon Islands state. It did, however, have a powerful social effect by encouraging the large-scale migration of Malaitans to Guadalcanal. The influx placed strain on traditional land ownership systems and saw the fabric of many small Gule communities torn by land sales that did not account for customary rights or the long-term well-being of the community.

With time, a small group of Gule politicians, led by Ezekiel Alebua, made use of the growing sense of unease regarding Guadalcanal's changing social and cultural landscape. The formation of the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army (later the Isatabu Freedom Movement) was a catalyst not only for violent conflict but also for the development of an ethnic frame as a vehicle for explaining that conflict.

Multiple factors contributed to the entrenchment of the ethnic frame to explain the increasing violence. The formation of the Malaitan Eagle Force, again a loose coalition of diverse actors and interests, created the perception of a fundamental divide between the residents of Malaita and those of Guadalcanal. It was a perception held by both the government and the international media, whose simple portrayal of the conflict had a powerful effect on the way it was eventually treated by international actors.

The continued violence and the failure to devise an indigenous peace-building strategy saw the formation of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands; a police-led peace-building mission with a strong regional contingent and an open-ended mandate.

For many academic observers, the deployment of a police-led contingent to Solomon Islands raised questions as to the direction of peace-building strategy in the post-9/11 world. The distinction between internal and external was blurred, it seemed, by the extension of constabulary authority into the foreign policy space (Greener 2009a; Hameiri 2009a; Hegarty 2005).

This research aimed to examine that interaction between internal and external as it occurred in its most overt form; that is, the interaction between international police officers and local communities. The analysis of the Tension period in Solomon Islands provided some background as to the context locally. However, to understand more about the issues associated with policing this context, the literature on community policing was reviewed.

The community policing literature was used here because of its focus on the interaction between police officers and local neighbourhoods. The literature documented the history of modern policing; showing that engaging with social and cultural diversity is a challenge that has been faced by police departments across the world for decades. The community policing model developed out of this process and represented an attempt to engage with neighbourhood residents on issues of crime control in ways not seen during the reform era. The new model set out an ambitious programme of philosophical, strategic, tactical and organisational change. While community policing was contentious within certain departments, its popularity with policy-makers and police chiefs saw it utilised across the US, Europe, Scandinavia, Asia, Latin America and Australasia,

A review of the literature on community policing helped to identify the core components of the model and some of the practical measures taken to mobilise it. However, the literature also raised concern as to some of the personal, professional and political implications of utilising the model. These concerns were first outlined and explored in terms of how they manifested in a domestic setting. It was then necessary to consider how these issues might present within the

context of a post-conflict peace-building mission in Solomon Islands. This review produced four core questions which became the basis of the research going forward. Those questions were:

1. How do international police officers adapt to the local social, political and cultural context and how does their understanding of that context shape the approach they take towards engaging local communities?
2. What strategies do international police employ to interact and engage with the local population and how do these strategies aim to contribute to an effective and equitable partnership between officers and citizens?
3. What efforts were made by the international police to overcome, alter or reinforce existing perceptions of the police and how were these efforts adapted to, and affected by, local context?
4. How do international police officers manage their relationships with other contributing agencies (including other national policing contingents, local police and military support) so as to ensure a consistent and co-ordinated policing service is provided to the host community?

Together, the questions aimed to understand more about how the day-to-day interactions between international police officers and local community residents might be connected to the search for a sustainable peace in Solomon Islands.

Semi-structured interviews with a small sample of New Zealand Police officers who had served in Solomon Islands explored their day-to-day interactions with the local community and with local Police staff. There was significant variation across the sample; officers were deployed at different times, to different locations and took on vastly different roles while they were deployed. However, all had a frontline component to their job that saw them working in and engaging local neighbourhoods. Their experiences in this space produced some interesting findings.

The focus of question one was how officers adapted to their operating environment in Solomon Islands. Adjusting to the local social, political and cultural context was challenging for many of the officers interviewed. Former Police Commissioner Peter Marshall discussed the complexity of the task facing New Zealand officers on their deployment by highlighting the fragility, or “excitement”, that characterised political and social affairs. New Zealand Police, he argued, faced an entirely new challenge in having to balance the interests of a highly diverse and disparate population and build peace.

Within this context, it was surprising that officers experienced little of the ethnic conflict that had, according to international media, defined the Tension period. New Zealand Police interviewed instead argued that much of the political tension playing out in Honiara had little, if any, effect locally. Even in areas such as the Weather Coast, officers stated that most of their work was generated by local issues, namely alcohol and drug use and domestic violence. In this respect, officers described how their role reverted to being, in many ways, similar to that of their role in New Zealand; that is, one of policing rather than peace-building.

The finding is significant in light of concerns raised in the literature review regarding the potential for the community focus of international police officers to reinforce or re-ignite harmful expressions of social cohesion. In the case of New Zealand Police, it seems that the Malaitan-Guale divide that was so central to narratives of conflict in Solomon Islands a few years prior, was largely irrelevant in their day-to-day work. Far from reinforcing this narrative, New Zealand Police appear to have assisted in the restoration of peace by looking for issues arising in local communities, not in media reports.

Adjusting to the unique social, political and cultural climate of Solomon Islands did, however, present some challenges. Officers expressed mixed views when discussing their interactions with churches and with the local wantok system. Some avoided becoming involved, while others made extra effort to engage these institutions and there were both personal and professional reasons for these differing stances. The finding highlighted, however, the breadth of the task facing the officers. Often acting as the sole representative of RAMSI in a particular area, it was difficult for officers to form a relationship with each and every social or cultural institution that operated there. 'Wearing too many hats' can be a problem facing individual officers in such a context.

Overall, however, the officers interviewed showed a nuanced understanding of the social and political climate in Solomon Islands. Rather than seizing on simplistic portrayals of community life, they recognised that social connections and customs in Solomon Islands were diverse and multi-layered. The nature and limits of a community changed depending on the wider context, constantly expanding and retracting in response to a myriad of social, political and economic influences. To account for this, officers needed to be sensitive to changing power dynamics in these communities. Where Chiefs or Big Men may have been easy to identify in some communities, in others it was apparent that authority was more diffuse. Rural areas and remote islands varied significantly from one another, as did the more urbanised communities in and around Honiara. Acknowledging these variations was an important step for New Zealand Police officers. Not only was it important for ensuring that local populations were treated with a degree of respect, but also for identifying strategies for community-led peace-building and capacity development. The case of one officer using a customary justice hearing to discuss the role of RAMSI and the future of Solomon Islands presents just one example of the ways in which New Zealand officers sought to link their day-to-day work with RAMSI's overarching mandate.

Once officers had adapted to this environment, they needed to ensure that their work engaged communities in a way that was fair and that allowed for equal access to the peace-building process. This was the focus of question two. The question drew from concerns raised in the literature that highlighted how a close partnership between police and community members

may serve to privilege some and dis-empower others. The problem is of particular concern when Police aim to utilise certain members of influence in the community whose interests may, as a result, be favoured over the interests of others. In Solomon Islands, a number of groups, namely women and children, face barriers in accessing government services and equal protection under the law. There is the potential, therefore, for the work of international police officers to further entrench those barriers by partnering with those sections of the community who established the barriers in the first place.

There was some evidence of this occurring in Solomon Islands with one officer describing how they would always approach the men in a village and receive their approval before interacting with the women and children. While this likely reflects a desire to show respect for local customs and local authorities, it can also send a powerful message to those marginalised sections of a community. However, it appeared that most officers were able to identify the potential for this to occur. Many spoke of the different ways in which local power structures interfered with what they would regard as a fair police service.

Most obvious to the officers interviewed here was the way in which women in some communities were treated. The case of one officer, who tried to support the establishment of a domestic violence refuge facility, was described in some depth. The case showed how disheartening the work of international policing can be, especially when local power structures work to thwart the efforts of well-intentioned officers trying to help. However, the example also showed, that while the initiative was unsuccessful, the issue of domestic violence was raised in a way that may never have occurred without the personal commitment of that officer to the well-being of local women. This personal commitment extended beyond anything outlined in RAMSI's official programme, yet it appears to have been crucial in achieving some of the small successes that international police had in their work.

The third research question centred on trust. Issues regarding trust featured heavily in the work of the officers interviewed here. Most recognised that a delicate balance had to be achieved given the history of fragile relationships between the RSIPF and its people. RAMSI's People's Surveys have consistently identified low levels of trust in the RSIPF and a reluctance to report crime to RSIPF officers.

New Zealand Police officers felt a sense of reluctance to be in the position they were, feeling that it was not the place for New Zealanders to be guiding the development of Solomon Islands and its future. The feeling was further accentuated by the fact that New Zealand suffered from many of the same problems associated with domestic violence, alcohol and drugs that Solomon Islands did. Defining and acting upon 'right' and 'wrong' in such a context became a difficult task for many of the officers interviewed.

To address this, officers fell back on their more intuitive inter-personal skills, making an effort to engage locals in conversation and treating people how they themselves would like to be treated. These efforts, often occurring outside of work hours, meant that officers were able to build a rapport with local people. This rapport, as one example from Malu'u illustrated, meant that even high-profile former militants were keen to interact and engage with New Zealand Police. It also meant that when decisions did have to be made; they were handled in a way that showed respect for local people and respect for the relationships that had been built.

These relationships may seem insignificant, however, they played an important role in many communities by encouraging people to talk to each other and talk with Police. These small scale successes form the basis of the community policing model and contribute positively to peace-building at the local level. The effort one officer, with the help of colleagues from the RSIPF and Tongan Police, invested to build a soccer pitch showed the importance that individual officers placed on these relationships. Operating at the very grassroots of the peace-building effort, these officers saw even the smallest gestures as having an important effect in the development and safety of local communities. These relationships were built not on official operating strategies, but on trust.

The fourth question examined issues arising out of the relationships between different policing contingents involved in RAMSI. It looked at the relationships New Zealand officers had with the counterparts in the RSIPF. It was immediately apparent to all of the officers interviewed that the RSIPF faced a severe shortage of resources and that the level of mobility and functionality maintained by RAMSI would not be able to be sustained beyond its departure. These shortages, many believed, prevented willing and able RSIPF staff from performing their job to the best of their abilities. However, what an even greater number of officers interviewed identified, was a lack of self-confidence that pervaded the organisation. Staff at all levels lacked confidence in their ability to do the job in the way they had been trained. Officers interviewed believed it may have been, in some ways, a lingering symptom of the Tension years that had a significant effect on morale. Others felt that the lack of confidence stemmed from the challenges facing the wider justice system and the feeling among many that, even if a job was done right, the justice system still may not have the capacity to deal with it in the manner required.

Because of the lack of confidence among staff at all levels of the RSIPF, many New Zealand Police described their role as being more of a mentoring position. By this, they meant that they sought to encourage and motivate individual officers to carry out the tasks required of them, rather than dictate orders or demand action. This mentoring style drew from the strong personal relationships that worked to negate tension and avoid issues where they may have been typically expected. Female officers, deployed to advise male officers who were older and of a

higher rank, was a particularly interesting case demonstrating the value of strong personal relationships and the New Zealand style of mentoring rather than directing. This approach came to be a key point of difference for the New Zealand Police and one that had a profound effect on the way they were perceived and treated by the local population.

New Zealand Police found it challenging trying to integrate their style of community policing with that of the Australian Federal Police. While the Australian contingent was well-resourced and well-trained, there was a sense among the officers interviewed here that they struggled to achieve the same level of support among the local populations as the New Zealand Police did. At the planning level and in the media, there had been concerns regarding Australian dominance of the mission. Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Phil Goff, spoke of some of these concerns and highlighted the sense of responsibility that the Australian government had over Solomon Islands. At the frontline, the evidence gathered here suggests that sense of Australian ownership over the mission was not well received by local Solomon Islanders or RSIPF staff. New Zealand Police officers commented how local communities made clear to them that the Australians were not well liked, despite the level of funding and resourcing they were providing.

None of this is to say that the two contingents did not function effectively alongside each other. In operational terms, the two forces were well integrated, reflecting years of close ties between the two policing organisations. However, the points raised above demonstrate the challenges in integrating different approaches to community policing. In a context where so much appears to have hinged upon a strong relationship between international police and local communities, it is concerning that some elements within the international contingent appear to have been received quite differently to others. Future efforts of this kind should look to integrate not only the operational and logistical components of their mission, but also look to bring together the philosophical and strategic orientations of the different contingents so as to build a coherent, mutually-supportive strategy to community-policing.

A further note should be made regarding the methodology. The semi-structured interview method was used here to allow officers to elaborate on their experiences and, in a way, shape the direction of the analysis. There were challenges associated with analysing their experiences through the lens provided by literature review. Officers had a wide range of views and expressed them in variety of ways sometimes making it difficult to identify the points of similarity or difference across them. This, however, was part of the analytical process and ultimately allowed for a more effective canvassing of viewpoints and perspectives on the issues being examined. Through the interview process, officers were able to discuss both their individual experiences and discuss how they related to the wider peace-building effort in Solomon Islands. They were free to lay the emphasis where they felt that it needed to be laid

and often made the effort to repeat the experiences that they saw as being central to their understanding of their work. Such experiences, however, can be difficult to relay to an 'outsider', or someone who has never been in the position themselves. Officers often took time to consider their responses and phrase them in ways that allowed for them to be understood by a wider audience. This was again valuable because it meant that officers could provide a sense of context to their experiences and, through this, give a more detailed picture of what they were sensing on the ground in Solomon Islands. It is difficult to see how officers would have been able to express their views with the same authenticity had a more structured interview method been utilised. A structured survey would likely have had the same weaknesses in that it forces a response that may not reflect the views of the respondent.

Thus, the semi-structured interview was invaluable in allowing officers to relay their stories on their own terms and in ways that they were most comfortable with. The wealth of information they provided (over 50,000 words in total) is testament to the value of the method in gaining, not only detail, but context and it was this context that was crucial to learning more about the personal and professional challenges they faced in their everyday work in Solomon Islands communities.

From the beginning this thesis has been clear in its intention to focus on a small range of the issues that arise out of the use of international police officers in post-conflict settings. It aimed to contribute to the literature by analysing just some of the challenges facing individual police officers when deployed in such a role. Where much of the current literature seeks to question "...how, if at all, the rise in international policing represents any kind of qualitative shift with regards to broader concepts of intervention (Greener 2009a:5-6)", this research highlighted the importance of local-level processes in building peace at the community level. While the normative dimensions of international policing are of critical importance, academic observers must pay attention to the day-to-day actions that give the practice its meaning for the people who are subject to it. This means considering the interaction between officer and citizen and understanding how those interactions might help or hinder the peace-building process. It also involves considering how the relationships between different components of a mission might shape its outward appearance. Only when more is understood about the local-level challenges of international policing will a more accurate picture emerge as to its suitability and sustainability as a model for building peace.

Future research could further contribute to academic understanding of these challenges in a number of ways. The first step should be to involve a wider range of actors. Here the focus was on New Zealand Police and sample size was relatively small. Involving officers from other national contingents and increasing the sample size would allow for more robust conclusions to

be drawn about how perceptions varied across the RAMSI mission. It should also look to better survey local responses to international policing efforts in a way not attempted here. The RAMSI Annual People's Survey goes some way towards providing this information, however, more detailed analysis should look to examine the extent to which local communities felt they were engaged, not only in building safety and security, but in building peace.

The questions asked here drew from a review of international literature but were driven by a consideration of local context. Future research should ultimately be driven by those same considerations; that is, how appropriate is this model for the context in which it is employed? The context in Solomon Islands will be vastly different from those elsewhere and this should drive the focus of the research questions. However, a greater effort to integrate the findings from different case studies around the world is needed in order to learn more about the utility of post-conflict policing as a whole. Studies such as that conducted by Greener (2009a) go some way towards achieving this. Given the growing popularity of the community policing model, it is vital that a wider review is conducted so as to establish the appropriateness of using it in diverse settings around the world.

Having established these findings, a final note is required on the wider question that drives this research; that is, what role can community policing play in building peace in post-conflict societies?

Chapter two discussed briefly the linkage between peace-building and policing and highlighted the importance of translating the mission's goals into action at the neighbourhood level. It identified the importance of the international police officer's role by showing how they operate at the intersection of a number of local, national, and international forces. The findings above illustrate just some the social, political and cultural dimensions of their interactions and this serves to highlight the significance of the work that international police officers carry out. It appears that individual officers were able to have a positive impact on the peace process in Solomon Islands. The community policing model was a key enabler for this by affording officers a degree of discretion and encouraging them to engage communities on a personal level. The decentralised organisational structure meant they were active across Solomon Islands; in remote communities, some of which had never been visited by a Police officer before. Their presence offered a unique mechanism for facilitating discussions about the peace process and development more broadly. While the role of individual officers might have been limited in practical terms, their ability to encourage and enable these conversations was an important contribution and one not easily achieved using other peace-building strategies.

Ultimately, however, the successes these officers had did not emerge out of an operational model. A recurrent theme across all findings was the importance of personal relationships in the

peace-building process. This finding may seem insignificant compared to the scale of the challenges facing Solomon Islands. While many officers found the isolation of village life challenging upon arrival, they soon found that local people were welcoming and enthusiastic to engage the officers in their day-to-day work. It is true that the relationships between individual officers and local communities will not, in themselves, rebuild a functioning justice system or revive the economy. However, in a context where institutional linkages between Honiara and local communities were few and far between, these personal relationships acted as a conduit for RAMSI's objectives and its principles. The officers' experiences show that, in the absence of a strong central authority and established state infrastructure, the simple act of treating local people the way they themselves would like to be treated was vital in preventing disintegration and a resurgence of violence in Solomon Islands.

Underlying the immediate goal of peace-keeping and the longer-term goal of peace-building in Solomon Islands, was the day-to-day work of a significant number of Police officers from across the Pacific. While the officers interviewed here constitute only a very small proportion of those deployed since RAMSI's inception, their experiences hold important lessons for much broader discussions regarding post-conflict policing and international security. At all levels, it is the effort of individuals that makes mission mandates, institutional structures, and operational strategies operate effectively at the grassroots level. Without focusing on the efforts of frontline officers and the communities they engage with, the small successes and day-to-day progress made by RAMSI could well be overlooked. Thus, to finish, while the technical, professional and political aspects of peace-building are significant, observers should also consider the scope for the personal actions of individual peace-builders to mediate and shape that process and, through this, reassert the value of people in the process of building peace.

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